SIGHT AND SOUND

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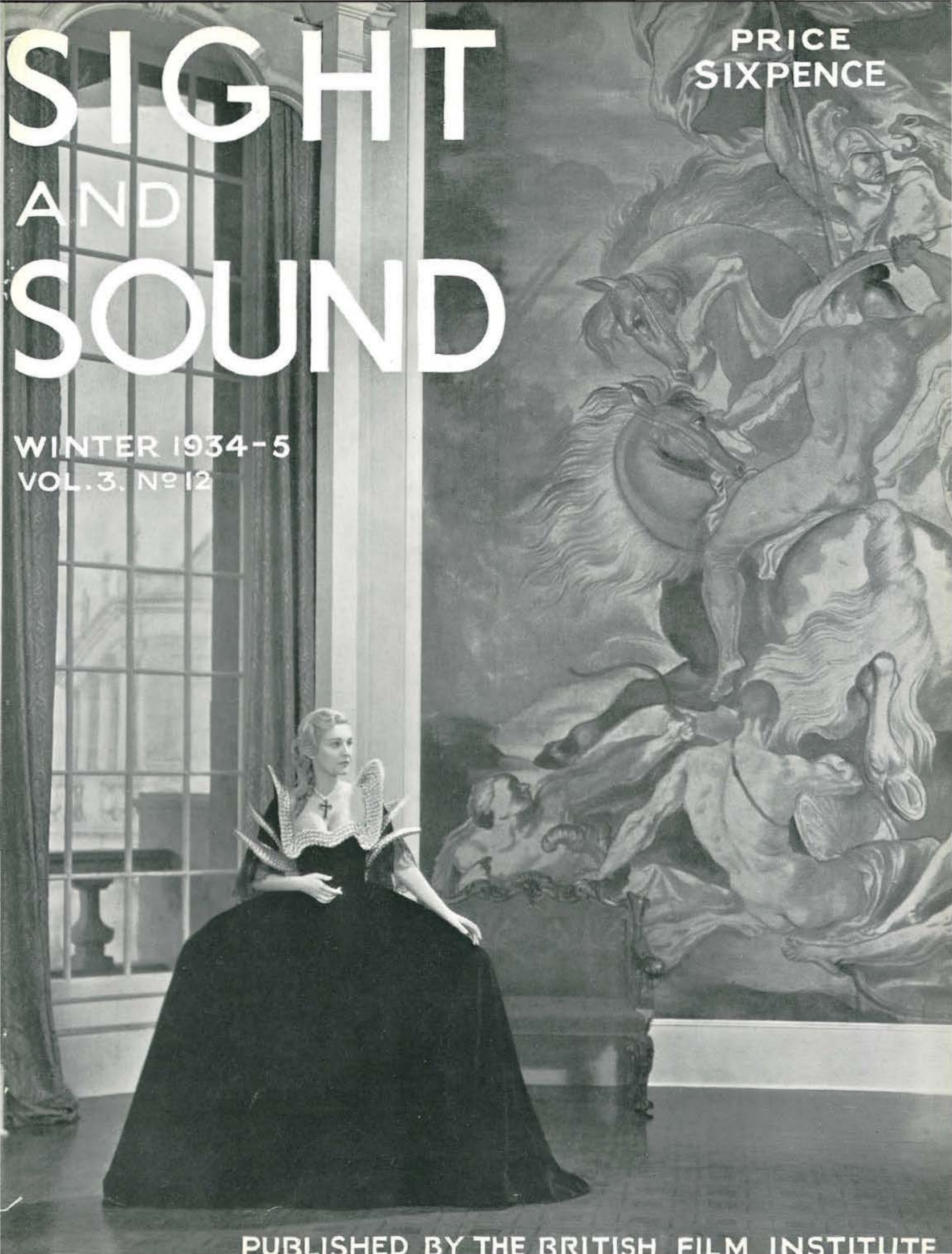

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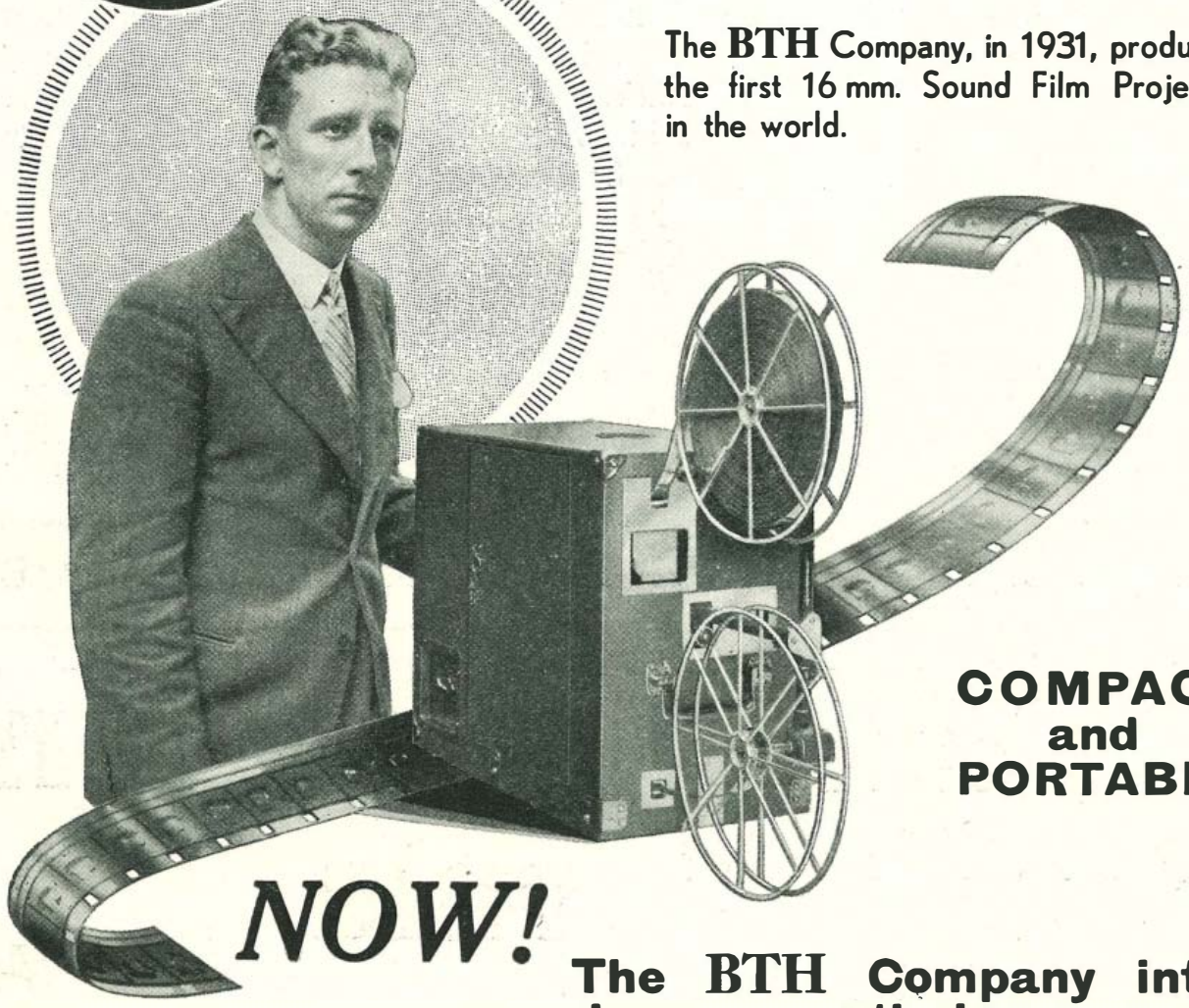

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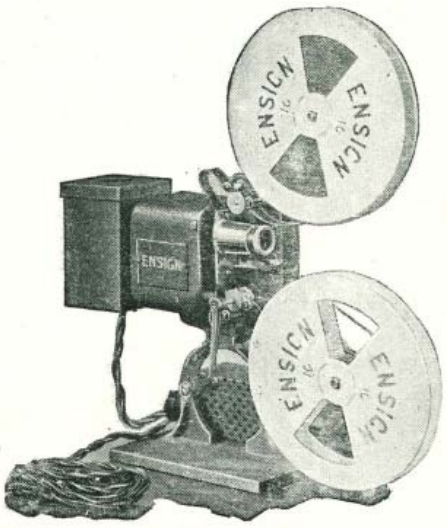

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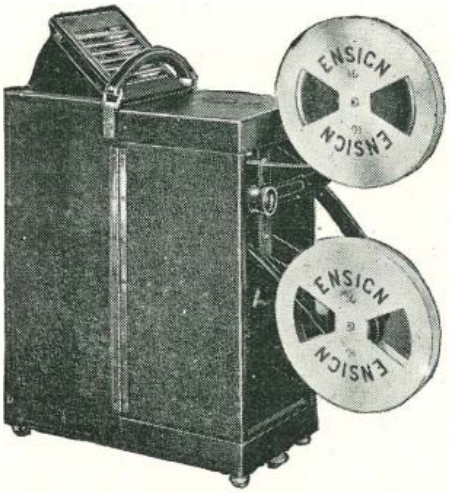

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BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE

THE CINEMA FOR THE SCHOOLS

Some Activities of the First Twelve Months

INFORMATION AND ADVICE

THE Institute is regarded as the authoritative body from which information and advice may be obtained on all matters relating to the use of films in schools. Several thousands of letters from teachers, lecturers, education authorities, and learned societies have been answered in detail. Enquiries range from types of screen to requests for programmes of films to fit in with a syllabus. Most enquiries are about projectors and films.

PROJECTORS

The first edition of 5,000 copies of A SURVEY OF NON-THEATRICAL CINEMATOGRAPH APPARATUS AND FILMS, prepared for the guidance of teachers and educational societies and distributed free, was immediately exhausted. Another edition was printed to meet hundreds of requests. The appendices contain the names of all firms supplying non-theatrical apparatus and films.

FILMS

Two thousand non-theatrical films have been catalogued. Of these three hundred have been specially reviewed and criticisms have been published indicating contents, quality, and educational suitability. When all existing films have been viewed a comprehensive, critical catalogue will be published to which supplements will be periodically added.

EDUCATION PANEL

Subject committees of the Education Panel appoint experts and teachers to review existing films, certify and approve films specially submitted to the Institute, advise producers of educational films, and examine all questions relating to the use of films in schools.

DEMONSTRATIONS AND LECTURES

The Institute has arranged demonstrations of apparatus and films and sent lecturers to speak at meetings throughout the country. The most notable of the demonstrations were the International Exhibition at the Polytechnic Cinema, the demonstration at the Academy Cinema, at which a speech was made by Mr. Ramsbotham, Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education, and the demonstration at the Phoenix Theatre, arranged for the 23rd Annual Conference of Educational Associations.

EDUCATION AUTHORITIES AND EDUCATIONAL SOCIETIES

Every local education authority has received copies of the Institute's Annual Report and pamphlet on apparatus and films and has been urged to consider the development of the use of films in schools. Many local education authorities and teaching organisations have become members of the Institute and are in close contact with the Institute for advice and information.

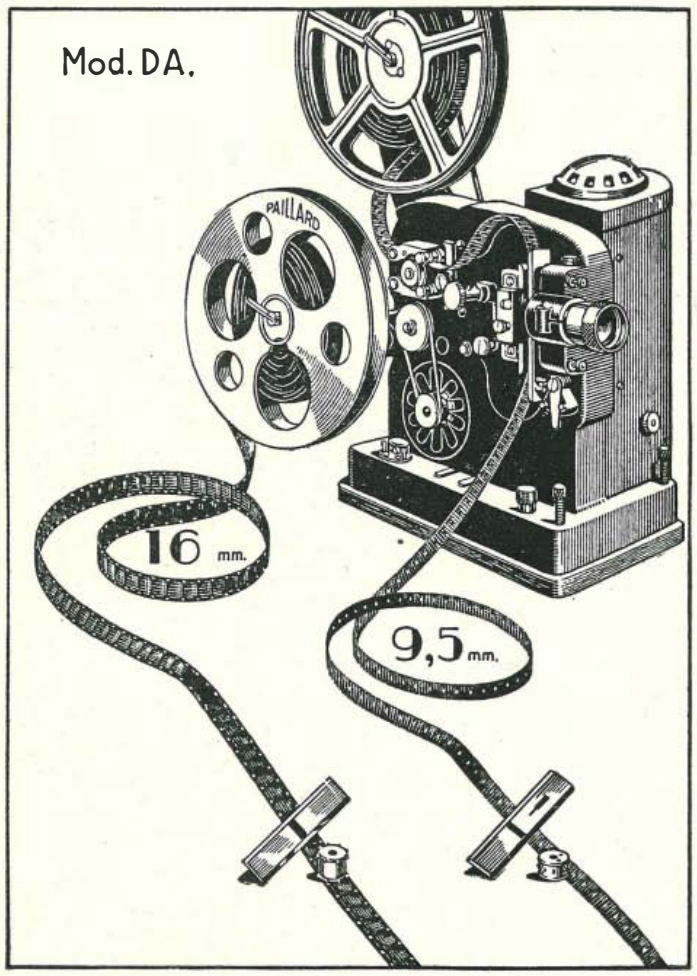
BOARD OF EDUCATION

A conference was held on January 11th between representatives of the Institute and officers of the Board of Education and the Scottish Education Department at which Mr. Ramsbotham, Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education, presided. Among the subjects discussed were the provision of projectors in the schools, the supply and distribution of educational films, and the establishment of a national library of educational films. The purpose of the conference was to consider methods of co-operation between the Board of Education and the British Film Institute. Mr. Ramsbotham said that the holding of the conference was evidence that the Board was giving serious attention to the film as a medium of education, expressed his entire sympathy with the objects of the Institute's deputation, and promised that the Institute should receive any support that the Board of Education could give.

So important was this conference considered by the B.B.C. that a special report of it was broadcast on the same evening.

SIGHT AND SOUND

A special section of the Institute's quarterly journal, " Sight and Sound " is entirely devoted to all matters relating to the use of the cinema in schools. This section has been officially welcomed by representative educational organisations as invaluable.



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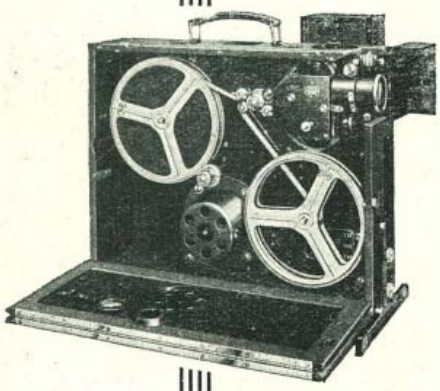

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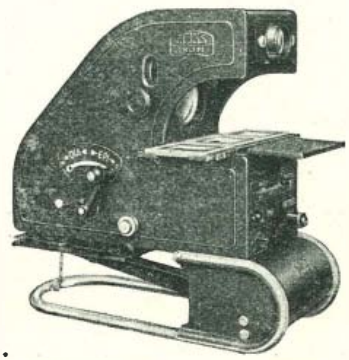

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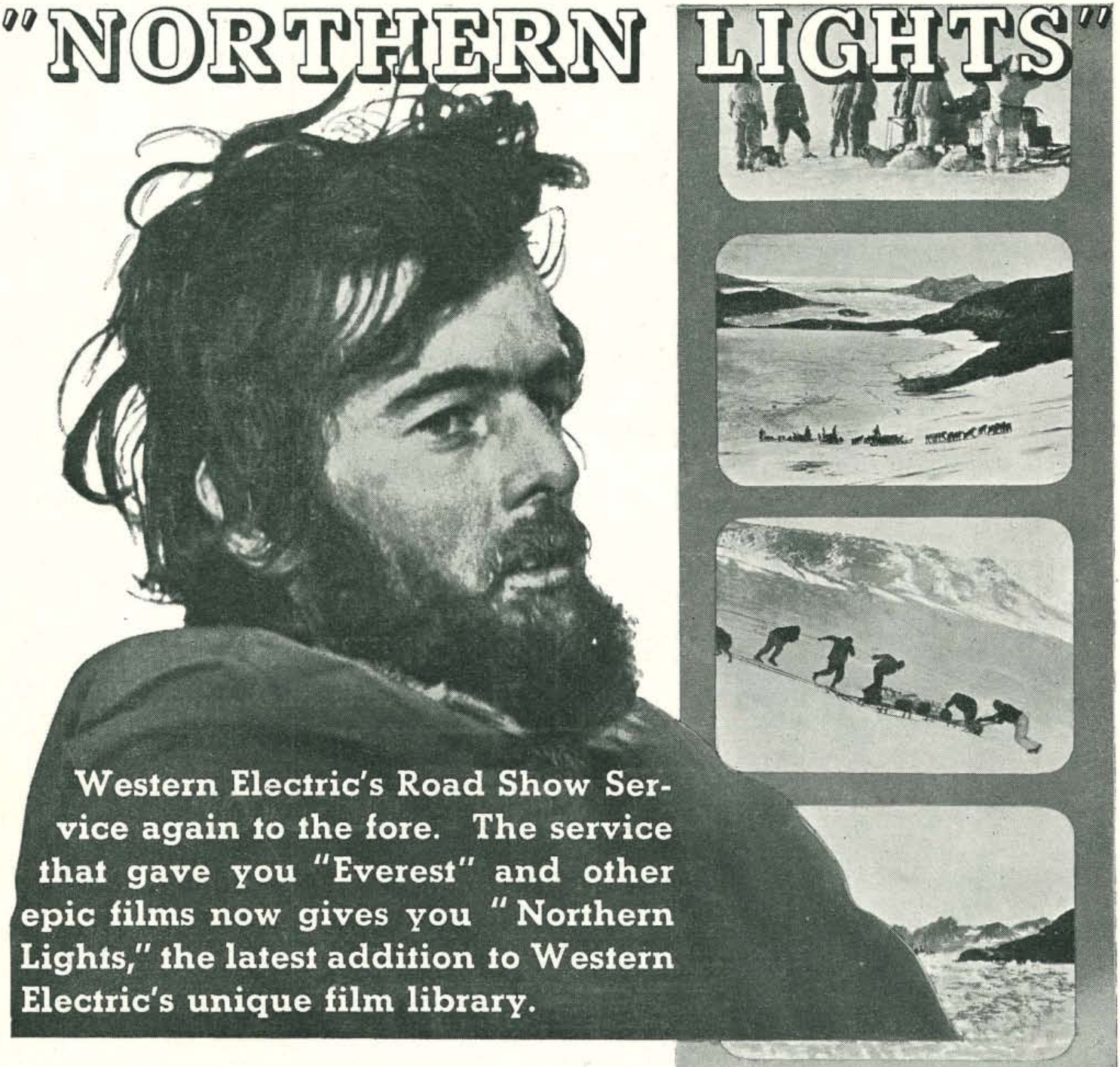

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VOLUME 3, No. 12 WINTER, 1934-5

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FILMS AND THE SCHOOL : A SECTION FOR EDUCATIONISTS

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A NATIONAL FILM LIBRARY

WHEN the British Film Institute was established, one of the specific objects which it set itself was the formation and maintenance of a National Library of Films. To-day there is still no Library and the need is daily growing more urgent.

Messrs. Methuen's courageous venture in publishing the scenario of *The Private Life of Henry VIII.*, which has provoked interest and comment in many quarters, is especially remarkable for throwing so sharply into relief a quixotic situation. Whereas a copy of the book will go to the British Museum library and there be preserved, no such preservation is assured for the film, and it may well go out of existence altogether, as has been the fate of too many classics of the cinema; (The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari, Destiny, Joyless Street and Warning Shadows, are examples of films which are almost or entirely unobtainable.)

Moreover, films of the documentary and news-reel type have a value to historians of the future which cannot be overestimated. "All history, from the records of the rocks onwards, is ultimately derived from documents." The film, by its ability to record speech and movement, has a value possessed by no other kind of historical document. Yet every week invaluable film records are being lost, simply because there is no one body responsible to the nation for their preservation. Great Britain, by reason of her imperial position, has peculiar obligations in this respect, as the Report of the Commission on Educational and Cultural Films reminds us :

> " It is equally important and more urgent to obtain deliberate documentary films of the great mass of local and traditional practices and conventions which make up the daily lives of primitive, barbaric and orientally civilised peoples within the Empire, and to preserve

them for future record before they are overwhelmed by contact with Western customs."

A National Film Library would not only store films, however. The urgency of the need for a central distribution agency is even more apparent, because more widely felt. The excellence of the programme of new educational films arranged by the British Film Institute, and shown at the Phœnix Theatre on January 5th, has been generally commented on. The plaudits of an appreciative audience were evident tribute to the progress made by producers during the last year in educational film technique. Yet production, however good, must be abortive without an effective system of distribution. While teachers still have to rely on a heterogeneous collection of separate commercial catalogues, to engage in three or four different sets of correspondence and accounts for each programme they wish to arrange, and to risk the constant disappointment of being unable to obtain the films they want, no systematic use of the film in education can even be envisaged. The British Film Institute has done much towards bridging the gulf between producer and teacher on the production side. There remains the task of doing the same thing on the distribution side. It is not too much to say that the whole development of the educational film in Great Britain rests on this as the next step.

Nothing short of a nation-wide system of distribution will meet the needs of education, as the Middlesex Report emphasises. The first stage towards such a system, however, is the setting-up of a central Film Institute Library which would first co-ordinate existing channels of distribution, and then encourage and aid the formation of local branches and specialist libraries. The way from chaos to organised decentralisation lies through centralisation. France has already set the example: the Musée Pédagogique began distributing educational films in 1920 when it distributed 54; in 1929 it had 47 affiliated branches and distributed 43,500 films. We wish to see set up in this country a National Film Library which would both distribute films to schools and bodies of students of all kinds, and also be responsible to the nation for the preservation of films of historical value.

The British Film Institute has already undertaken that preliminary survey of the conditions of film preservation which the Commission recommended. It addressed a request to the British Kinematograph Society, as being the body representing the best technical knowledge in the British film industry, to undertake an enquiry into the matter. The Society set up a Special Committee which has since reported (British Film Institute Leaflet No. 4). Following upon this, the Institute has drawn up a complete and detailed scheme for the running of a National Film Library which it is ready to put into operation as soon as circumstances permit. The scheme includes provisions for a Repository, Reference Library, Distribution Library, Theatre and Movieola Room.

The advantages of such a Library hardly need emphasising. For teachers and students it would become the recognised source from which any film might be obtained, or where it might be examined; it would give them authoritative information and advice, both individually and through the publication of critical bulletins and a comprehensive catalogue; lastly, it would be responsible for the preservation under the best possible conditions of films of national value. Nor are the advantages to the producer himself less clear: by its means he will enjoy the benefits of an efficient distribution service at cost-price; this price will be lower than if he himself were to undertake distribution, by reason of the amalgamation of overhead and other charges in one organisation; and lastly, his field of distribution will be greatly increased, since users will learn of the existence of films through the Library's information service which would have remained unknown to them in its absence.

In particular, we suggest, a Library of this kind would be eminently fitted to undertake the distribution of Government films, since in no other way is their distribution likely to be effected at so low a cost, or their use to education likely to be so fully assured.

John Loder in LORNA DOONE directed by Basil Dean (A.B.F.D.)

NOTES OF THE QUARTER

Film Tastes of the Public

The leading article in the Summer issue of SIGHT AND SOUND referred to the decrease in the attendance at cinema theatres, and the attention being given by the film trade to eliciting the tastes of the film-going public. In this connection it was mentioned that Mr. S. L. Bernstein was circulating to the patrons of his theatres a questionnaire calculated to secure some useful material to go upon in judging taste. Mr. Bernstein has been successful in collecting nearly 125,000 answers, which represent 50 per cent. of the number of forms distributed. The results have been analysed and tabulated and represent the unbiassed opinions of picture-goers of all types and ages. It appears that the majority go to the pictures regularly twice a week, and some of the younger people attend as often as seven times a week. The American stars are still more popular on the whole than the British, though George Arliss heads the list of preferences. Prominent among the favourite actresses are Norma Shearer, Greta Garbo, Kay Francis and Marlene Dietrich, while Gracie Fields takes seventh position. Besides George Arliss, five British actors come within the first ten, Clive Brook, Ronald Colman, Jack Hulbert, Charles Laughton and Tom Walls. It is interesting also to note that certain stars including Greta Garbo and Clark Gable appear in both the list of " likes " and " dislikes."

Amongst directors, Alexander Korda takes first place, thus replacing Ernst Lubitsch who held that position in the 1932 list. The most popular productions of the year appear to be Cavalcade, The Private Life of Henry VIII, I Was a Spy, Tugboat Annie, The Kid from Spain, and Voltaire.

Film Shows for Children

Special attention is being given at the present time to the organisation of film shows for children. Under the direction of Miss Elsie Cohen a " Junior Academy " was started on November 10th, and performances given every Saturday morning. The prices of admission were 6d. and 1/- and adults were allowed to attend only if accompanied by one or more children. The programmes have consisted of Mickey Mouse or Bonzo cartoons, general interest and travel films, and feature films like Puss in Boots, Black Beauty, " westerns " and one of the Our Gang series.

Another new venture is the Children's Film Society, which has been arranging special performances at the Everyman Theatre, Hampstead, about once a month on a Saturday morning. The programmes have included Mickey Mouse, Silly Symphonies, News reels, early Chaplins and general interest films. Mr. Stuart Legg gave a short talk when Cable Ship was screened, and Miss M. Field on another occasion spoke to the children on the Secrets of Nature series. Admission is 10/- for 6 performances, or 2/6 for single tickets, but it is hoped to reduce these prices as soon as the experiment is established.

The Bath Children's Cinema Council is now giving its fifth season of special performances on Saturday mornings at admission prices of 6d. and 3d.

At Edinburgh a committee of teachers is once more running regular performances with the assistance of Gaumont British. Each programme is shown at four cinemas on consecutive Saturdays, and the charge for admission is 2d. Although certain of the cinemas, owing to small seating capacity or the neighbourhood in which they are placed, do not cover the expenses, the scheme as a whole pays its way. The programmes are selected by the committee, and in addition to the usual cartoon and interest films, Samarang, Dick Turpin and S.O.S. Iceberg have been shown this season. Notes on the programmes are circulated to schools beforehand, and the teachers do the advertising for the performances. Glasgow has this season taken up the scheme, and the complete programmes are sent from Edinburgh to be shown in Glasgow in a similar way. The charges for admission here are 3d. for children and 6d. for teachers.

Dundee has most recently of all begun to organise children's matinees. Three experimental performances have been arranged by the Dundee Juvenile Organisations Committee with the assistance of a local cinema manager. The programmes are composed of entertainment films, and prices of admission are 2d., 4d. and 6d.

The British Film Institute is able to advise on suitable films available for children's performances, and is anxious to keep in touch with all those interested in arranging such performances.

Sub-Standard Films

The following communication was received from the Home Office in reply to a letter from the Governors of the British Film Institute :

> " I have laid before the Secretary of State your letter of the 19th October, in which you ask that a deputation may be received from the Governors of the British Film Institute to discuss the proposed new Regulations and ways and means of safeguarding the position of the educational film. Sir John Gilmour will be very glad to receive a deputation from the Institute, and will greatly appreciate any assistance which they may be able to give in the matter. He thinks, however, that it would be better instead of receiving the deputation at once, to postpone the date until the Institute have had an opportunity of considering a draft of the new Regulations.
>
> The question of safety in theatres and places of public entertainment generally has been under the consideration of the Home Office for some time past, and with the assistance of the Secretary of State's expert adviser on fire questions, a hand-book has been prepared and is likely to be issued before long for the general guidance of local authorities.
>
> The revision of the Regulations under the Cinematograph Act, 1909, has been a part of this wider question, and the Secretary of State can state at once that in any revised Regulations, so far as they might relate to slow-burning films, endeavour would be made to lighten substantially the onerous safety conditions now in force. In particular, it might certainly be assumed that Regulations 7 to 12 inclusive of the existing Regulations would practically disappear, and that Regulations 14 and 15 would be substantially modified.
>
> A further communication will be sent to you as soon as a convenient date for the reception of a deputation can be suggested."
>
> 3rd November, 1934 *Signed*: S. W. Harris

The Governors of the British Film Institute have appointed the following to represent them : Col. J. Buchan, M.P., Mr. T. Ormiston, M.P., Mr. J. J. Lawson, M.P. and Mr. A. C. Cameron.

In reply to questions in the House of Commons on November 1st, Sir John Gilmour informed the House that he was glad of the opportunity to state that the revision of the Regulations was under consideration. " One of the points to be dealt with," he said, " is the relaxation, in favour of slow-burning films, of certain requirements necessary for fast burning film. No draft has yet been completed and it is, I think, scarcely necessary for me to add that before any new Regulations are finally made, full consultation will take place between my department and the different interests involved." In reply to a question addressed to the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education as to whether he had any record of accidents in primary or secondary schools which had been caused by cinematograph displays, Mr. Ramsbotham said that " no case of an accident caused by a cinematograph display had been brought to the notice of the Board."

In order to discuss the issues which would be involved in any revision of the Regulations, the British Institute of Adult Education convened a meeting in November which was representative of over forty educational, social and religious organisations. Mr. George Peverett of the National Adult School Union presided, and Mr. R. S. Lambert, Vice-Chairman of the British Institute of Adult Education, gave an analysis of the situation. A resolution was passed which emphasised the importance of the sub-standard film in education and urged that the Home Office should act in consultation with the societies concerned in framing any revised regulations for the use of this type of film.

In connection with this question of sub-standard films, the National Council for Civil Liberties has just issued a pamphlet containing some observations on the proposed new Home Office Regulations—together with the substance of a correspondence reprinted from *The Manchester Guardian*. The pamphlet can be obtained from the Council's offices at 3, Dansey Place, Wardour Street, London, W.1.

A Branch of the B.F.I. for London

At a meeting held on Tuesday, 8th January, of members of the Institute living or working in London, a resolution was unanimously passed that

a London Film Institute Society should be formed. The formation of the branch was authorised by the Governors on January 10th and an interim committee has been appointed. The objects of the Society will be to co-operate with existing societies which have objects similar to those of the Institute and, where necessary, to initiate new activities. It is hoped to publish a monthly calendar and bulletin of London film activities which will be of interest to members, and to arrange a series of public lectures.

Applications for further information should be addressed to the Hon. Secretary, London Film Institute Society, c/o The British Film Institute, 4, Gt. Russell St., W.C.1.

Demonstration of Films and Apparatus

The twenty-third Annual Conference of Educational Associations was held at University College, Gower St., London, from Monday, December 31st, to Saturday, January 5th. During the week an exhibition of projectors for schools was arranged by the British Film Institute, and on Saturday morning a programme of educational films was shown at the Phœnix Theatre, Charing Cross Road. The programme consisted of: Machine Tools, *Part* 1 (The Milling Machine), Mensuration, a film on solid geometry, and Electricity, all produced by Steuart Films; Fruitlands of Kent, Physical Training, The Amoeba, and How Talkies Talk, produced by G.B. Instructional; The Merlin, British Instructional Films (Pathe); The Wizard in the Wall, a London Films Production made for the British Electrical Development Association; and the Molecular Theory of Matter, produced by Western Electric, the last two being distributed by Western Electric through their hire service.

In the interval a short address was given by Professor Winifred Cullis, who pointed out that the programme was in the nature of an experiment, but an experiment, nevertheless, of great value.

Professor Cullis paid a tribute to the educational film producers for the public-spirited way in which they were endeavouring to break down a vicious circle and find out what was needed by teachers. Professor Cullis then indicated the work which the British Film Institute was doing through its Education Panel and the various subject committees working under that Panel. She pointed out that the production of films was an arduous business, and the great trouble was that people only gave expression to their opinions when they disliked a film. The need was for constructive criticism, and this she felt the Education Panel of the Institute could supply.

She emphasised that a film cannot replace the teacher any more than a broadcast lesson; nor were educational films intended to take the place of a single lesson, but to give a broad view, to enable the teacher to emphasize a number of points and to summarise the instruction of several lessons. The films shown that morning were evidence of the fact that producers were prepared to go forward and they would appreciate every encouragement.

Two of the central figures in the Russian film THE STORM, by Petrov (Reunion Films)

NEWSREEL IN THE MAKING

By H. W. Bishop, Production Manager, Gaumont British News

THE Newsreel, like any other publication, is subject to criticism from the general public, which usually takes the form of letters to the press, and those who are closely connected with its production sometimes find it hard to reconcile some points raised with actual facts. A common criticism is the comparison of the subject matter used in the Newsreel with that of the daily press and although we both aim to place before the public the news of the day, it is rare that press and film news can coincide in their choice of subjects. The reason is simply understood when it is realised that a Newsreel is a bi-weekly publication and its screening time averages only ten minutes. It would be impossible in this precious ten minutes to present even a fraction of the leading " world happenings " which occur in the three days available for each issue. Whereas a newspaper has space which must be filled, a Newsreel seldom has sufficient space for the numerous " world-events " with definite claims for inclusion. Again the Newsreel's primary function is to present pictorial news with action and where possible with natural sound. This brings me to another opinion which is often expressed, i.e., " that we allow too much space to subjects of a Naval, Military and Air Force character." The answer is, that most of these subjects are good " pictorially," although some of our more captious critics appear blind to this fact and insist on believing they are a subtle form of propaganda. I can assure those who are of this opinion that this is far from the truth, as it should be obvious that from a " pictorial point of view " the launch of a ship (whether a battleship or any other kind of vessel), is both impressive and picturesque. To substantiate this statement I would refer you to the never-failing interest created at any coastal resort when the lifeboat is launched down its slipway. Also, the enormous public support given to any thrilling air display, and again, the applauding thousands who never fail to attend Naval or Military functions. In each instance it is primarily the pictorial action of these events which attracts them, and likewise justifies their inclusion in the Newsreel.

Before passing on to other matters, a comparison should be made between " pictorial-action " pictures suitable for a "Newsreel" and " posed " pictures used by the pictorial press. If you will, any day, carefully scrutinise the pictures in your daily paper you will soon realise that in the majority of cases it would be impossible for any comprehensive action to be added to them. The lack of action, therefore, again eliminates a great number of subjects from the Newsreel diary. A common instance of this would be to compare a well-known personality speaking on a subject of national interest ; one picture will suffice to head a press article, but if included in a Newsreel an average of one minute only can be allowed to the speaker. Imagine for one moment having to request our speaker to reduce his subject (on which he is an authority) to a time limit of one minute ! Our experience of his reaction is that he is justly indignant and will not entertain the idea at all. On the other hand, if we accede to his request for a minimum of five minutes, this would occupy more than half of our reel, and if, without his knowledge, we censor his speech to one minute after filming, the continuity is lost, as it is impossible to add words to join phrases and sentences ; the speech in consequence loses sense and continuity, with the added danger of subjecting the speaker to ridicule.

Prominent among other forbidden subjects are " controversial news " and " crime." The former would immediately antagonise filmgoers who disagree with the viewpoints screened as they strongly object to being forced to view opinions that are contrary to their own outlook. On the question of " crime," although a large portion of the public are interested sufficiently to read press articles describing these crimes, they will not tolerate cinematograph journalism illustrating them. This point of view is quite understandable as a cinema's function is primarily to " amuse."

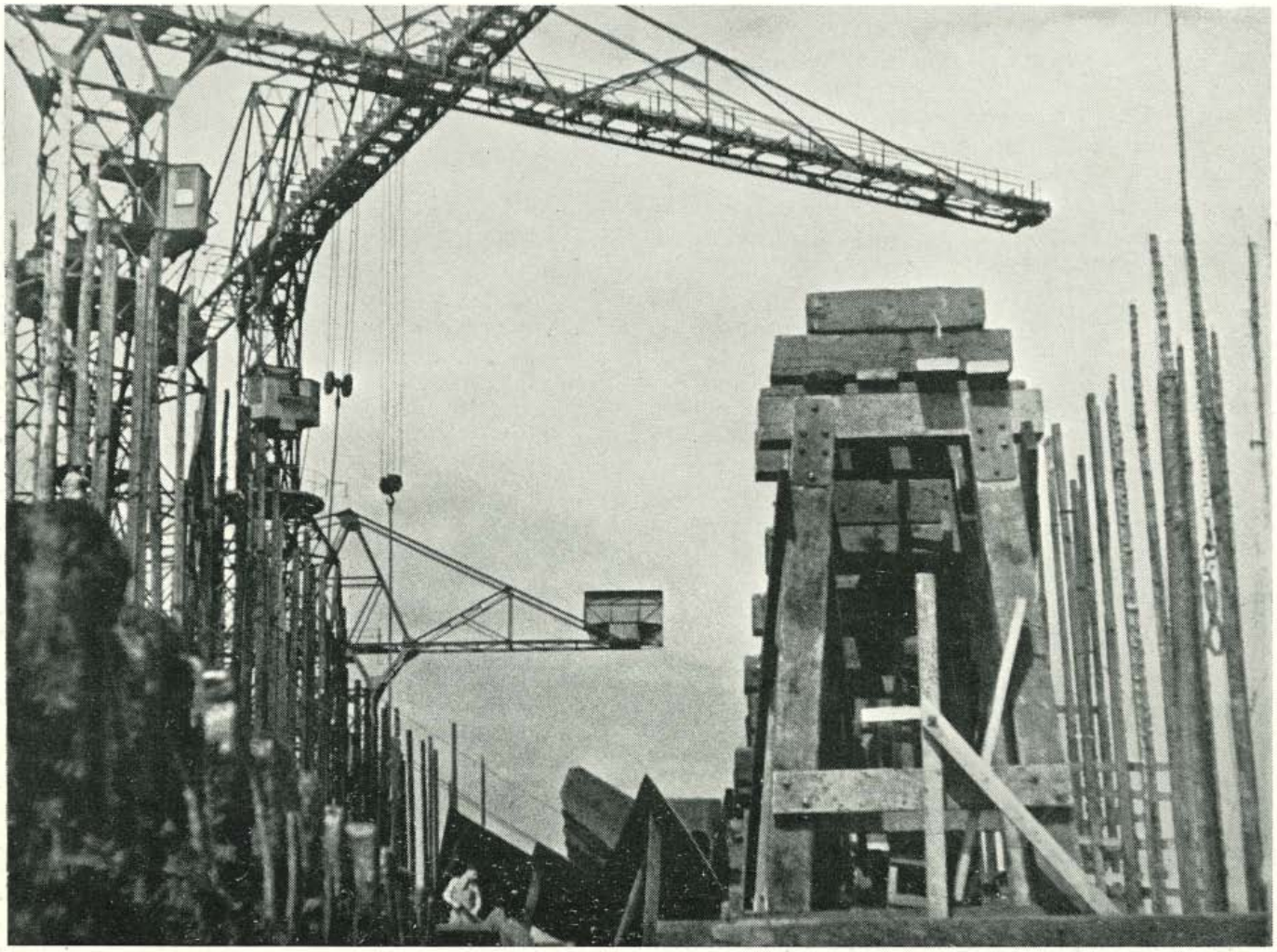
As space will not allow a more detailed list of the problems that beset the choice of material for a " Newsreel," the few given must suffice as a brief insight only of the many obstacles to be overcome when compiling an issue.

As we still have a goodly variety of subjects left in our diary, let me briefly summarise a few of the difficulties which the Production Department must solve before obtaining a record for editing. First, let us take any interior subjects, and included under this heading are Political Meetings, Exhibitions, Shows, Dinners, Balls and Indoor Sports, etc. It is not commonly realised that before any of these subjects are filmed permission not only has to be obtained from the authorities controlling the function, but as the public are invariably present, the Local Public Authorities (equivalent to the L.C.C.) must be assured that the additional lighting equipment which is necessary for filming purposes complies fully with the regulations and does not in any way interfere with the safety of the public, obstruct exits, or interfere with the normal function of the building. The insurance on the building must also cover any accident arising from the presence of film equipment and, in the case of dinners, the banqueting manager must be satisfied that his service will in no way be retarded ; and even when the above negotiations have been brought to a successful conclusion, the cameras set and lights switched on, a speaker will often state that he cannot possibly proceed under the brilliant illumination necessary , thus bringing all our efforts to nil, in

spite of the fact that the speaker's consent is always solicited before the event.

There is a common illusion in uninformed quarters that the Newsreel cameraman is welcomed wherever he goes. Experience would soon convince that the reverse is the case. Almost without exception somebody's permission must be obtained before filming the most innocent events and when a production unit arrives on the scene of any disaster he finds every hand turned against him. The police, in association with the authorities responsible, combine to raise barriers to prevent a comprehensive record being obtained. As a pictorial record is essential, his difficulties are many and various. He cannot use an " eye-witness " to describe the scenes without a pictorial record of them, and even if he were able, " eye-witnesses " invariably " dry up " when confronted with a camera and microphone, which have the effect of reducing them to unintelligibility.

I will now deal briefly with an outstanding subject of news interest, upon which the full resources of a Newsreel are engaged ; and, for example, I will take the recent wedding of T.R.H. The Duke and Duchess of Kent. From the comfortable seat in the cinema it is hard to conceive the enormous amount of organisation necessary to ensure a complete record of such an important event. For weeks beforehand, and during our normal routine, interviews and negotiations proceed with the various authorities, commercial and private, and with individuals who are in possession of vantage points along the route, involving long discussions with people who have inflated ideas of the value of their site. Failure of negotiations such as these means the subsequent search for new positions. Interviews must be had with the Police and Government Departments, and constant attention paid to every detail, to ensure complete continuity. Every possible eventuality must be provided for, so that no incident, however slight, escapes the eye of the camera, or the ear of the microphone. It is necessary to place the most suitable type of equipment at its most advantageous angle, blending the general atmosphere, scenes and close-ups into a rhythmic whole. The strictest attention to detail is essential for final success, as mistakes cannot afterwards be rectified. A Newsreel cameraman never gets a second chance to retrieve his errors, and his mistakes are magnified on the screen many thousands of times for the whole world to view. Associated with the above organisation is another equally vital point, i.e., provision must be made for the immediate dispatch of the exposed negative from the camera positions to the laboratories for processing and editing. This is no mean task when upwards of thirty cameras are



SHIPYARD, by Paul Rotha (G.B. Instructional)

distributed over a wide area and messengers are confronted with enormous crowds and traffic regulations, but not a moment must be lost in transit if screens are to be served with the prints, which are sent by air to distributing points situated at the more important towns throughout the British Isles. Meanwhile the film editor is cutting, synchronizing and commentating the finished article, and before the aeroplanes have taken off with the edited film the Production Department's attention is claimed by the subjects which must be dealt with at once for the next publication. And thus throughout twenty-four hours of the day and every day in the year, a Newsreel organisation is on duty to fulfil the responsibility of supplying pictorial news to the waiting millions who would otherwise be unable to witness the leading events of the day.

" NEWS " is a hard task-master, but few of us would change our environment had we the opportunity, as it has compensations peculiarly its own, with the added encouragement of hearing the public increasingly remark " we will wait and see it on the pictures."

PROGRESS OF THE ROME INSTITUTE

THE International Institute of Educational Cinematography has been at work now since 1928. The Institute has not had an easy task for in 1929 in most countries no active steps were being taken to develop the educational film ; and its first labours were necessarily restricted to useful propaganda likely to arouse the interest of institutions, individuals and governments in the possibilities of the film in education.

After four years of strenuous work, the International Convention exempting approved educational films from customs duties has been put into operation. It has now been signed by 25 nations, including nearly all the great producing countries—Great Britain, Italy, France and U.S.A.—and ratified by six. The examination of films has already begun, and up to December 18th, 143 subjects had been viewed. The judgment passed on films submitted to the I.E.C. under the Convention will be included in an international catalogue which is to be kept up to date and published in various languages.

In the meantime, one of the most valuable features of the Institute's work has been the organisation of Conferences, which have given the opportunity for the discussion and examination of common problems. The First International Congress of the Educational and Teaching Cinema was held in Rome in April, 1934, at which some forty countries were represented. The International Institute claims that the reports prepared for the Congress by experts from all parts of the world and numbering over 200, together with the Resolutions adopted by the Conference lay the foundations of national and international action to be taken in the educational film world during the next few years.

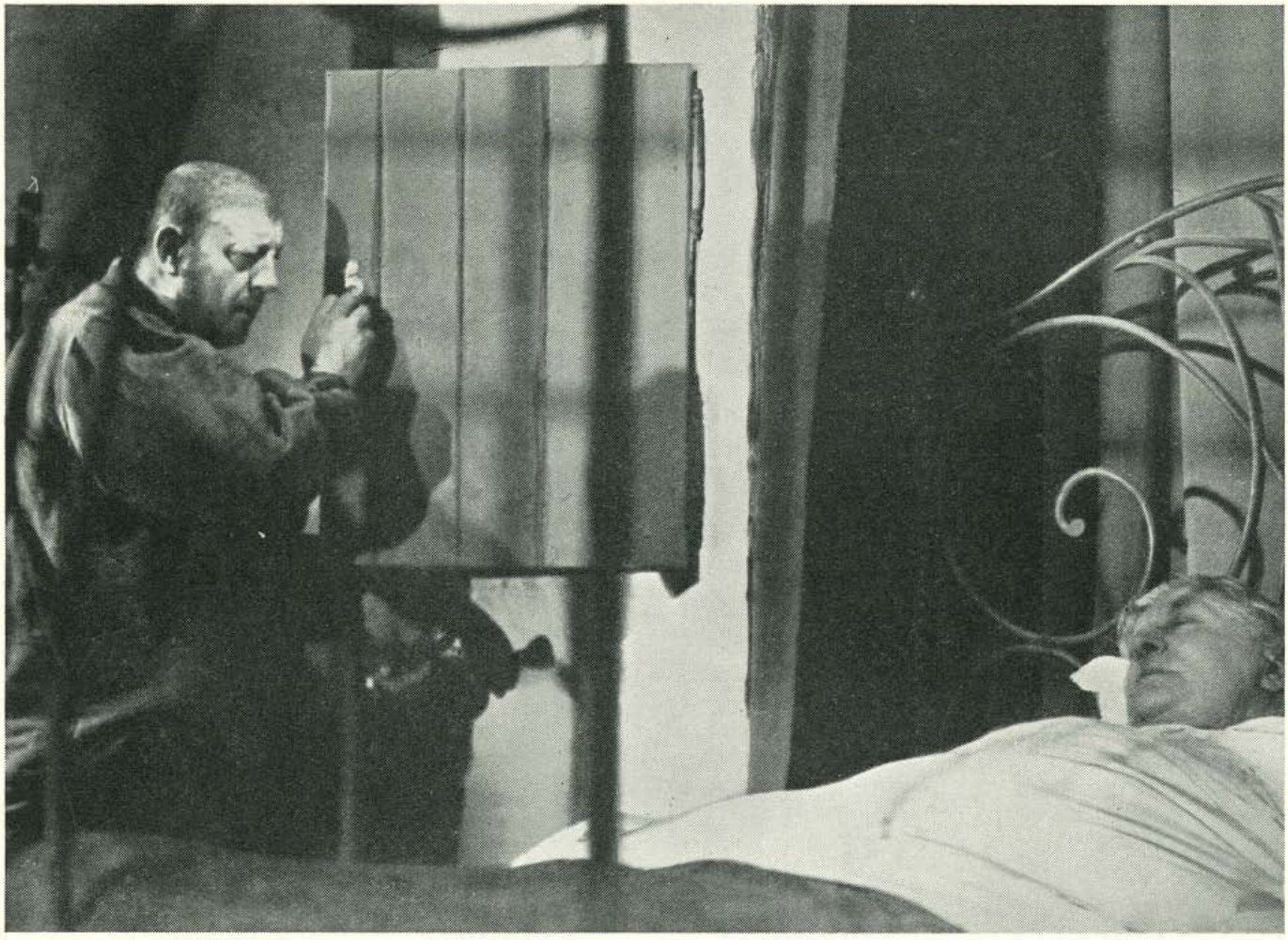
In May, 1934, in accordance with one of the resolutions of the Congress, a Conference to discuss the sub-standard film met at Baden Baden, and informal agreement was reached as to the necessity of standardising this type of film. A further Conference, which was called at Stressa in June, led to the adoption of the 16 mm. " ICE " standard.

Amongst the other meetings organised by the Institute or in which it has collaborated, the Second International Exhibition of Cinematographic Art, arranged in association with the Venice Biennial Art Exhibition, aroused keen interest. On this occasion the highest award, the Mussolini Gold Challenge Cup for the best picture, was gained by Great Britain with the film Man of Aran.

Equally valuable is the work which the Institute is carrying on quietly at its headquarters. The I.E.C. has gradually formed what is perhaps the most complete library of the Cinema, comprising more than 700 volumes. At the same time a collection, which is at the disposal of any student, is being made of various data, catalogues, enquiries, books, pamphlets, reviews, newspapers—anything in fact, which has been said or written on any aspect of the cinema.

In addition to the *International Review* and the *News Bulletin* which are issued regularly by the Institute, over twenty publications have appeared on special subjects, such as the relation of the cinema to Agriculture, Education, Hygiene, the Teaching of Languages, while as a result of enquiry and investigation, certain important studies and reports have been prepared. *Africa Before the Cinema* and *Asia and the Cinema* are two examples from a lengthy list. Next year an International study on the *Comparative Legislation of the Cinema* will be published, while in connection with an enquiry relating to children and the cinema, 51,000 questionnaires were circulated in Italy, Belgium, France, Spain, Rumania, Austria, and Uruguay. The progress of another great project, the preparation of a *Cine Medical Encyclopaedia*, has been referred to in SIGHT AND SOUND from time to time, for the Medical Panel of the British Film Institute has undertaken the British section. Special mention must be made of the *Encyclopaedia on Cinematography* which is now almost complete. This monumental work on which the I.E.C. has already spent two years, will be published during 1935, and the Italian edition will be followed by editions in other languages. It deals in some 3,000 pages with every branch and aspect of the cinema, and more than 300 persons from various countries have assisted in the work.

Side by side with these activities the Institute has been promoting improved international contact, by assisting in the formation of national organisations or institutes and by associating its labours with institutions set up under the auspices of different governments. Over twenty such corresponding organisations are in being. A practical programme which will maintain constant connection between them is being studied, and this will enable the I.E.C. to carry out its future work with a fuller understanding of the international task entrusted to it.



Harry Baur as Jean Valjean in LES MISERABLES, by Raymond Bernard (A.P.D.)

THE WESTERN PERIL

By Georges Clarrière

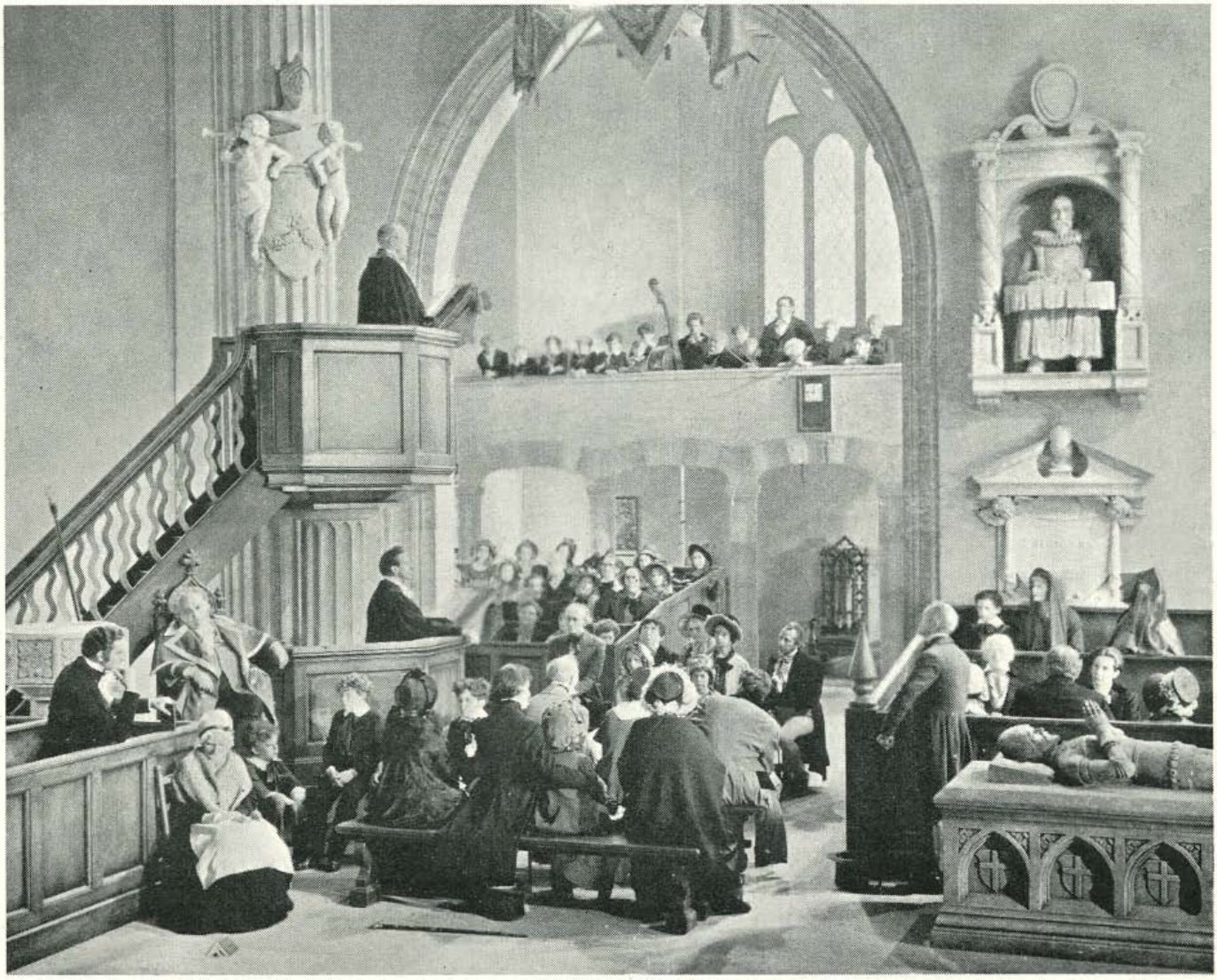
THE very eminent French author and critic, Georges Duhamel, once a doctor of medicine, expressed his serious belief, in his famous work *Scènes de la Vie Future*, that eventually, unless there was a contra-effort, France, and indeed, *the whole of Europe*, would be " americanised." He inferred that the most dangerous and subtle symptoms of this " americanisation " were showing themselves in the present young French generation, as the result of the conscious or unconscious propaganda spread through the exhibition of American films. He argued that France might eventually lose the better qualities of its Latin temperament, and absorb in exchange the worst ingredients of Western so-called emancipation.

The French Ministry of Education, as well as the Ministry of Beaux-Arts, without admitting the fact, would appear to share M. Duhamel's opinion. It is largely for this reason, always unstated, that the French government has, from time to time, studied various projects for the protection of the French film industry. What it really wants to do *is to protect the youth of France.* Eminent philosophers like M. Duhamel, together with prominent educationalists, are somewhat perturbed by the ever-growing easy-going attitude of the present young generation, which seems to desire life to be more or less as " in the films." The growing influence of film exhibitions upon the habits and customs of the daily routine of French life is thought to be greater than most people realise. Well, if one counts all the cinemas together, super-cinemas and halls seating but a hundred spectators, one may say that well over sixty per cent. of films shown to the French public are American productions. There is no A. and U. control as in England. Anyone may go to any cinema. Parents may take the responsibility, if they like to, of the after-effects of what they allow their children to see on the screen. French parents have the habit of thinking their children adults, long before they reach the age of twenty-one. They believe that sound-training at home and in the family is a bulwark against anything undesirable outside. The cinema is popular in France, but much more so among the youth of both sexes than

middle-aged people. In the whole of France, only about 10 per cent. of the people, at the most, are habitués of the cinema. There is a larger percentage of theatregoers. The rest of the people prefer the pleasures of home life and the joys of the family circle. The café-bar, and not the entertainment hall, is the popular pleasure-ground of France. The multitude of French people gain more pleasure and satisfaction from a discussion over an aperitif or a cup of coffee than from picture-going. Youth it is, that crowds to the cinema.

The French Government, which so clearly recognises how much the eventual prestige of the country depends upon its youth, is keeping a more watchful eye upon the cinema than ever the average onlooker could suppose. Those in the French film trade consider that the Government ignores the value of the industry, and tyrannizes over it by unjust taxation. Compared with the scale of taxation applied to other forms of entertainment, cinema taxation is certainly unjust ; but in thus suppressing the cinema, as it were, the Government is indirectly curbing the pretention of those who handle the strongest weapon directed against French sentiment and thought, and Latin culture in general. This weapon, consciously or unconsciously used, is the standard American entertainment film, in which are reflected ideas, customs and morals utterly conflicting with the mentality of generations upon generations of French people. The view held is that of M. Duhamel in his fierce and biting criticism of the United States, in which he forced the note almost to gross exaggeration, merely in order to awaken French minds. This view is that " americanisation " has already set-in. The French government has, apparently, through its Ministry of Education, and the Ministry of Beaux-Arts, decided that this somewhat insidious propaganda must first be curbed, and then stopped.

Now the French consider that America, industrially, is a country which merely looks upon the rest of the world as so much territory for commerce of all kinds, including the commerce of films. It has no consideration for the tastes of other countries, and does not modify its exportation product, excepting when and where it finds itself checked in business. It first tries to force the goods, and those who accept without demur receive, perhaps unconsciously, the first tinges of " americanisation." The march of progress may compel, and rightly so, the acceptance



A scene from George Cukor's DAVID COPPERFIELD, in production (M.G.M.)

of foreign things ; and, where this cannot possibly be felt to do any harm to national character or racial sentiment, it is right. The Bank of France itself has accepted the Burroughs adding machine ; maybe because it found nothing better in its desire for efficiency and progress. The question of foreign films is quite another matter ; one is not obliged, in the interests of progress, to accept them.

In France the successfully exploited American film is generally what is called a "succès de curiosité." It is admired by the cinema-going public for its wonderful settings and photography, its clever acting, and its marvellous technique ; but very rarely for its story quality or intellectual value. These things are, and probably always will be, foreign to the Latin mind. The Americans do not, or will not, recognise this fact ; but think, or act as if they thought that what is good for the United States (and maybe for England also) is quite right for France and the rest of the world. They edit " versions " and push the exploitation of these in France, in many cases hurting national sentiment. They may capture for a time, the gaping youth of France ; but they often offend the serious-minded adults and middle aged, who, year by year, go less frequently to see films now that the cinema, even the talking picture, is no longer a novelty. When they do go it is to see French films particularly, and not foreign attractions. They might go more frequently to the cinema if there were more French films ; but the output of these, largely owing to financial difficulties, is limited.

A few years ago, " feeling the draught " as they say, and especially so when the French began making their own French-speaking films, many American film producing concerns bought the American rights of famous French plays and novels. They then made the mistake of producing films from these subjects, on strictly American lines of thought and idea ; so that when they were " put over " in France, they fell with a flop, and were even laughed at. Then the Americans tried the experiment, which is still going on, of engaging French star artistes. The resultant film was generally a failure in France, or merely a " succès de curiosité " ; and, in the process,

This illustration affords an interesting comparison with the scene from DAVID COPPERFIELD reproduced on the opposite page. Certain differences as well as resemblances will be noticed.

(*By courtesy of " To-day's Cinema "*)

WE LIVE AGAIN, with Anna Sten, directed by Mamoulian (United Artists)

the French artiste, working entirely out of his element, was " spoilt," as it were, both for the French and any other public. No French audience likes to see one of its favourite artistes taken and " americanised " and then thrown back at it. This process is always, in the long-run, disastrous to the reputation and prestige of the artiste. The resentment in France is great amongst cinema-goers of all ages, and turns them, quite rightly, from foreign to home production.

The French Government, although apparently ignoring all this commercial work and experiment in the film world, is perfectly well informed, through its Ministry of Education and its Ministry of Beaux-Arts. It is simply playing a " waiting game " until time is ripe for action. The rank and file of educationalists throughout the length and breadth of France, especially now that films are officially recognised as being the means of instilling ideas and giving instruction, are acting as information agents; and a colossal amount of research and statistical work is going on behind the scenes. Film commerce, thinks the Government, though perhaps needing certain protection, may largely look after itself; but the youth of the country, from which this commerce draws the bulk of the money it makes, needs taking in hand and guiding. Ministers, legislators, educationalists and others concerned in the welfare of France do not *say* that they fear some sort of " americanisation " of the future citizens by way of apparently innocent film entertainment; but, nevertheless, they hold, very largely, the views of M. Duhamel. They are not foolishly anti-foreign; but, rightly, pro-French. In all sincerity, they cannot be anything else.

This is really what is behind, and right behind, the present friction between the French and the American film industries. Outwardly, of course, it is a commercial fight over importation duties, taxes, tariffs, and all the rest of it. The French are waiting, somewhat idly, the Americans are sulking and have withdrawn all their advertising from the French trade journals; and, in the meantime, the studios and the market are filled with persons of every nationality except French. So, sooner or later, the French Government will have to act—and act vigorously!

At a meeting between representatives of the British Film Institute and the Film Censorship Consultative Committee at which representatives of the British Board of Film Censors were present, consideration was given to a proposal that the British Film Institute should be recognised as the authoritative body to certify non-fictional films having a cultural and instructional value. The Institute has now been informed that the F.C.C.C " is of the opinion that if the B.F.I. accords a voucher of approval to any film, such voucher should be treated as an integral portion of the film and always exhibited at the commencement of such film. In places licensed under the Cinematograph Act 1909, the voucher of the B.F.I. will not be regarded as being in abrogation of or in substitution for any conditions contained in the license issued by the Licensing Authority." The Governors have considered the matter and have instructed the General Purposes Committee to take appropriate action.

STEREOSCOPY

AN ANSWER TO ARNHEIM

By A. Vesselo

THE principle of stereoscopy in moving pictures finds its chief opposition in Herr Arnheim's book *Film*. Yet the day of stereoscopy as an accomplished fact draws undoubtedly nearer; and with its approach it becomes necessary to determine whether Herr Arnheim's views can be answered.

His position may be summed up as follows:—

(a) The film is not, as its opponents assert, a 'mere mechanical reproduction' of nature. In fact, it is precisely that non-reproductive element which it possesses that makes it an art. ('It is due to the divergencies between film pictures and nature that it is possible for a work of art to emerge from a film camera,' p. 46). The general contention here is that it is just the limitations inherent in any artistic medium which make that medium potentially artistic.

(b) Among the most important limitations of the film is that relating to depth. The illusion of depth in a film is very small. It is owing to this lack of illusion that close-ups, cutting, etc., are made possible. Given stereoscopy 'formative media like *montage* and particular 'angles' become definitely impossible . . . Obviously *montage* will seem an intolerable accumulation of heterogeneous scenes if the illusion of reality is very strong. Obviously also a change in the position of the camera will now be felt as an actual movement within the space of the picture. The camera will become an immobile recording machine, every cut in the celluloid will be mutilation . . .' (p. 285-6, on the Faultless Film).

I hold that these statements are the oddest possible inversion of the truth. Here are my reasons.

The opposition between reproduction of nature on the one hand and art on the other is a false one. All visual and plastic art which is not primarily the expression of a utilitarian purpose in its object (as with architecture) and thus in itself to that extent an actual constituent element in our working environment, is fundamentally reproductive of objects in that environment. Combined with this factor is that of selectivity. A work of art demands both factors in close correlation. It is the tendency of the Philistine to stress the reproductive, and the 'highbrow' the selective, to the exclusion of the other. But unfortunately the 'highbrow,' who is too often on the defensive, tends frequently to obscure the selective element in just the same way as his opponent, and instead merely to deny the value of the reproductive. In this he is badly at fault. If an opposition is necessary, then it is that between the superficially reproductive and the expressively reproductive, not between the reproductive and the formal.

The question arises of limitations in the medium. In Herr Arnheim's view, a medium whose potentialities were limitless would be useless. This is a simple contradiction in terms. The artist is a man who makes the most of a medium within its limits: clearly, that does not mean that he *demands* certain specified limits. The less the external, compulsory limitations of the medium itself, the greater the scope for the selectivity of the artist, who is enabled to impose his own limits at will.

In any case—what precisely *is* this elusive film-medium, whose limits must be so jealously preserved? In the arts from which Herr Arnheim derives so many facile analogies, we can always assign the medium specifically as stone, or wood, or oil-colours, or copper, or something of that kind. But in film? . . . Is it celluloid? Hardly. I suggest that it is no less than the basic material of nature, *in the most perfect reproduction we can achieve*. Given this, our limits are only those of time and of aspect presented: we cannot present everything, and thus it is left to us to create a work of art by a process of imaginative selection, along the lines of cutting, camera-angle, variation of distance, and those other means with which we are acquainted (with perhaps additional ones which we have yet to learn). I have said that all visual art with certain qualifications is to some extent reproductive. Let me now plumb the depths of heresy by asserting that the film, at its highest point, must have the power to reproduce its objects with a complete illusion of reality.

We may recall that Epstein, before attempting the work for which he is now famous, took care to perfect himself thoroughly in the art of life-like representation. Thus he took perfect external reproduction (or as perfect as possible) as a necessary first step towards something deeper. Other great artists have followed a like course. In the same way with film, we must first achieve complete technical mastery over our material: then only can we do with it as we please.

However, Herr Arnheim has asserted that complete illusion (particularly with regard to depth) will take out of our hands just those selective powers which are artistically essential. He supports this doctrine by a series of superb rationalizations.

On p. 70 we read that 'a picture whose space illusion is very strong is correspondingly difficult to evaluate for its formal qualities'; and that these formal qualities (of composition, design, etc.) 'would be completely lost in the plastic effect of a stereoscopic projection.'

Frankly, this is nonsense. Are there no such

N.B. All references are to the English edition of Rudolf Arnheim's "Film": translation by L. M. Sieveking and Ian F. D. Morrow. (Faber, price 15s.)

Clive Brook in THE DICTATOR, a Toeplitz production, directed by Victor Saville (G.B.D.)

things as sculptural groups? And yet these are three-dimensional. The latter quality in no way destroys the possibility of formal design. Indeed, even in painting there is a noticeable striving after depth, because a greater impression of depth serves actually to emphasise contrasts of form between different objects, and gives them added significance. Mere formal designs always lose just by being *merely* formal, without any further outside reference to give the formalizations value. How far is it true that the Dutch interiors are flat? They may not be strictly stereoscopic, but yet the tendency is towards as much depth as possible. Nor are they alone in this: they are but a single instance of a widespread artistic purpose.

On p. 110 there is a passing reference (by way of analogy) to the absurdity of thorough-going stereoscopy in oil-painting. I suggest that even this is not so wholly absurd as it seems. It is, of course, absurd in as far as its application is strained and it is treated purely as a novelty. To that extent the serious painter will naturally shun it, as he would shun the work of the man who uses pieces of tin for high-lights, or who builds up expressionist pictures entirely out of orange-peel. But apart from this element of implied charlatanry, the absurdity depends mainly on the fact that the art of painting has through thousands of years developed its potentialities without reference to stereoscopy: a change in this direction would involve a violent break in continuity.

Once it were properly absorbed into the medium, however, the stereoscopic principle would probably cease to be absurd. Where three-dimensional art is well in the tradition of things (as in sculpture) it is not thought absurd. The two kinds of three-dimensional art, of course, would be very different in *execution*, the one being *actually* three-dimensional, the other giving a three-dimensional impression on a flat surface. But that does not affect our comparison.

Were colour a novel invention instead of an accepted part of painting, it would share the apparent 'absurdity' of stereoscopy: and this may help to explain a prevalent attitude in regard to colour in films. But in any case the analogy between film and painting is very tenuous. The fact that the one *moves* and the other is static makes a tremendous gap between them. If it is absurd to imagine a stereoscopic oil-painting, is it not more absurd to imagine an oil-painting endowed with movement? The factor of movement is a huge step towards the side of realism. Having made it, we must follow our course to the end: there is no turning back. Moreover, the progression from stage to stage in the achievement of greater realism in film is so quick that breaks in continuity are (relatively) unimportant.

I may add that the real absurdity of stereoscopy in oil-painting is the impracticability of ever obtaining such a thing satisfactorily by the brush. It would seem to demand mechanical means, altogether outside the painter's province. But film-effects inevitably depend so much on mechanical means that the objection here ceases to be valid.

On pp. 236-7 we are informed that 'if the picture becomes strongly three-dimensional, the screen loses its character of cogent limitation. It becomes no more than a chance and variable incision—a square peep-hole through which part of a large space can be looked at'; and thus artistic composition is no longer possible, since the picture 'is no longer contained within the plane of the screen but is behind it.'

With this suggestion also it is exactly the reverse that is true. The greater the illusion of reality in the subject-matter, the more striking the effect of the selective, non-realistic limitation of field afforded by the boundaries of the screen. The more the picture really seems to extend outwards beyond what is shown, the more significant becomes the fact that we are focussing upon just this point and no other.

The danger of close-ups and unusual angles, as Herr Arnheim himself notes on p. 90, is that they tend to divorce themselves from their context and thus lose point and meaning. But the more realistic the reproduction the more this danger recedes. We are no longer tempted to ask 'What on earth is this supposed to be?' The devices of the camera are given a fuller value, for now the shots displayed in large measure suggest their own background.

Herr Arnheim, however, assures us that stereoscopy would make *montage* impossible. Of a non-stereoscopic sequence of scenes he says 'one looks at them just as calmly as one would at a collection of picture postcards . . . If at one moment we see a long shot of a woman at the back of a room, and the next we see a close-up of her face, we simply feel that we

have turned over a page and are looking at a fresh picture. If film photographs gave a very strong spatial impression, *montage* would be impossible. It is only the partial unreality of the film-picture which makes it possible.' (p. 33).

Herr Arnheim's fallacy, here as elsewhere, is to imagine the spectator as watching the film from an entirely external, analytical point of view. But in as far as the spectator does this, the film fails. It is the business of the film to make its audiences forget the conventions which bind it and throw themselves right into the action. The film can do this more effectively than any other medium. Hence its power over simple minds.

The truth is made clear by the irritating effect of devices which tend to break the illusion. In the Gaumont-British film Friday the Thirteenth a special kind of wipe-dissolve was used which unintentionally broke the illusion in this way. For a moment after each dissolve one saw the picture for what it was, as something flat and unreal—and in that moment the whole effect was destroyed.

Herr Arnheim's suggestion about the cutting-in of stills (p. 120) is significant of his attitude. This device again serves no purpose but to dispel the illusion and spoil the picture.

It is just because even non-stereoscopic film gives us a fairly strong spatial impression that *montage* is possible at all. Otherwise the effect would be that hinted at in Friday the Thirteenth—a meaningless agglomeration of flat pictures without interconnection. It is only because each scene seems real in itself and thus immediately compels all our attention that the transition from one to another is made without an uneasy jerk.

As for the idea that stereoscopic *montage* would make us seasick, I am not in the least convinced by it; though, if the film-maker started out with that definite intention, I grant that he might succeed.

The only real flat film is the cartoon; and we may note without comment that in this field there is the least attempt of all to give us close-ups, odd camera-angles, intricate cutting and the like. The cartoon, having the minimum of depth, does as far as possible *without* these devices—not at all in accordance with Herr Arnheim's views, which would imply the other extreme.

The good director always takes great care to prevent us from realizing the flatness of the screen. Spectacle in films is ineffective just because by crowding the picture it makes it appear flat, dull and small. Here lack of selectivity lessens depth and breaks the illusion. The use of such a device as the travelling camera, on the other hand, has the opposite result. Employed judiciously it *creates* depth and herein lies an immense part of its value.

From the very beginning the aim has always patently been at a greater and greater illusion of depth and reality. The elaborate lighting-effects to which we have grown accustomed have this as their first purpose. The natural end of it all is stereoscopy, and the power to reproduce nature in a perfectly life-like manner.

The goal of art lies *above* reality, not below—in something *more* than faithful reproduction, not less.

In their relation to the matter in hand, Herr Arnheim's views on the introduction of sound are instructive. He says :—

'The fact that people took the silence of the movies for granted was of course because in spite of everything they never quite lost the feeling that it was after all only a picture' (p. 38); whereas the real explanation is that one adjusts oneself automatically to the conventions demanded by the medium. Moreover, the customary musical accompaniment was an admission that the absence of sound was always subconsciously felt. Herr Arnheim's pretty rationalisation does not bear scrutiny.

A little further on occurs the sentence 'It is only after one has seen talkies that the lack of sound is conspicuous in a silent film.' This indeed proves my point. As soon as the artificial conventions previously required are transcended and cease to be necessary, their value departs and one is only irritated by the needless restrictions they impose.

Stereoscopy, I may finally assert, is not only inevitable, it is quite in the tradition. It is a step onward, not a going off the rails. Oddments of technique here and there may have to be discarded, but otherwise the course remains a straight one.

It is of course true that every mechanical modification, and consequent widening of scope, makes film-art much more complex and difficult. To this extent Herr Arnheim's advice is salutary: let us by all means explore all the potentialities of film as we have it before we proceed farther. The more distant stereoscopy in practice the better.

But his theorizings on the subject remain quite invalid.

Hay Petrie as Quilp in THE OLD CURIOSITY SHOP, directed by Thos. Bentley (B.I.P.)

MECHANICAL AIDS TO TEACHING IN SOUTH AFRICA

By G. T. Hankin, H.M.I.
Member of the Advisory Council of the British Film Institute and of the Central Council for School Broadcasting

JULY, 1934, will always remain a key date in the history of South African Education. During that month over a quarter of the teaching strength of the Dominion gathered, either in Cape Town or in Johannesburg, to hear and discuss the educational theories and practice of men and women like Dewey, Rugg, Miss Parkhurst and Miss Carney of the U.S.A., Bovet of Switzerland, Van der Leeuw of Holland, Von Durckheim of Germany, Clarke and Lismer of Canada, Boyd of Scotland and Malinowski, Victor Murray and John Murray of England. The New Education Fellowship had selected this international team of speakers, and the teachers and administrators of South Africa formed an audience at once critical and enthusiastic.

The main theme of the Conference was "A Changing Education for a Changing World." With such a subject the possibilities of broadcasting and of the cinema could hardly be overlooked, and I accepted with pleasure an invitation to lecture and demonstrate at the Conference on these mechanical aids to the teacher. For this purpose I was granted special leave by the Board of Education, though I did not represent them officially. (The Conference though supported by the South African Government, was not official and the speakers were only personally responsible for the views they expressed). This article is therefore only a personal account of one small side of the activities of the Conference, and is intended for readers who are interested in the educational possibilities of broadcasting and films in a new country.

I took out with me a portable 16 mm. sound projector, a supply of educational films and gramophone records of school broadcast talks as follows:

Educational Films

16mm. SOUND

The Thistle	*Botany*
Teaching of French	*Language*
Breathing	*Hygiene*
Wheatlands in E. Anglia	*Geography*

35mm. SOUND

Brock the Badger	*Nature Study*
War in the Trees	*Parasitology*
Cattle Auction in the Hebrides	*Economic Geography*
Machine Tools	*Technical Instruction*
Windmill in Barbados	*Economic Geography*
King's English	*Interest in Speech*
Flight Machine	*Interest in communication*
Cable Ship	*Interest in communication*
Teaching of Reading	*Paedogogy*
Study of Child Growth	*Paedogogy*

35mm. SILENT

Port of London	*Economic Geography*
The New Generation	*Education in Chesterfield*
Way of Life	*General Biology*

Gramophone Records of School Broadcast Talks

Dutch Cheeses	*Geography*
Unemployment	*Tracing History Backwards*
A Singing Lesson	*Music*
History of Paper	*World History*
Caxton's Printing Press	*Historical Interlude*
Cumberland Sheep	*Geography*
Industrial Britain	*Adult Talk*

I gave addresses on the general question to about a thousand teachers in Cape Town and to about fifteen hundred in Johannesburg. In the afternoons there were demonstrations of films and of the records of broadcast talks. At Bloemfontein, Pietermaritzburg and Durban, Cinema Houses were hired, and I gave combined demonstrations of films and wireless to audiences of children and teachers. About fourteen thousand persons in all attended these various lectures and demonstrations. The conclusions I am venturing to draw are therefore founded on a certain amount of experience. For in addition to addressing these audiences I discussed educational problems with a very large number of teachers, inspectors and administrators.

Mechanical aids might be of enormous value in a new country where isolation is a numbing influence on education. One can only feel the greatest admiration for teachers who are carrying on their work in remote areas. (Some of those who attended the Conference travelled a thousand miles to do so.) It is no discredit to them to say that they need radio and films to bring new voices and new ideas into their schools. The world is changing for everybody, even if the changes are not apparent on the Veld as they are in the towns. Wireless and films are part of that changing world. All children have to learn to make a right use of the cinema and the radio when they are grown up, whether they be town dwellers or country folk. Not only therefore would these mechanical aids enliven and broaden the educational process, but they should train the taste and increase the power of rational enjoyment.

South Africans would be the first to admit that the Dominion is in need of unifying forces in education. Racialism is not extinct, and references in an evening talk to the unifying possibilities of wireless attracted considerable attention. The value of films and wireless for language teaching is of real importance in a country where English and Afrikaans are compulsory subjects in the schools and where

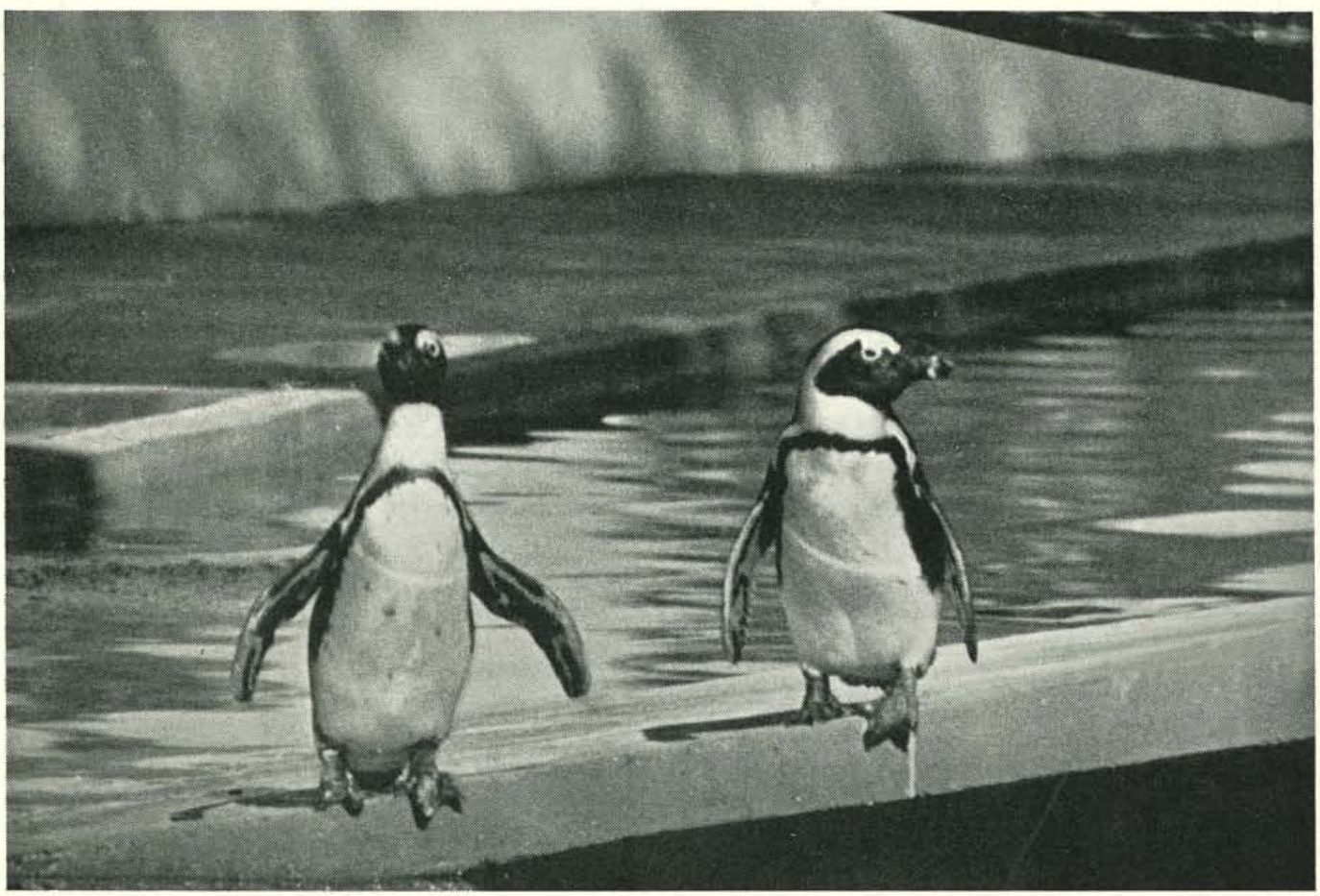
bilingualism is a political creed. The number of teachers who have to give instruction in a language other than their own is very large and mechanical assistance might be extremely useful.

It is not for Englishmen to reproach others with insularity, but broadening influences would appear to be specially needed in a country where the national history has tended to narrowness of outlook. Such an influence might well be exerted by the right type of film and broadcast talk.

Native Education is too vast and difficult a subject to be dismissed in a paragraph. From a discussion on films and native races with that section of the Conference dealing with this vital, and indeed world-wide problem, it was clear that here there is a vast tract still waiting exploration. No definite evidence appears to exist as to the efficacy of films in giving to native races technical and hygienic instruction, as well as some broader comprehension of the world outside their ken. The enthusiasm with which two hundred and fifty Bantus greeted an exhibition of films I gave in Durban convinced me that such exploration would be well repaid.

Practical experience has taught me that demonstrations unaccompanied by explanations are useless. The temptation to show a large number of films or to play a large number of records of broadcast talks must be resisted. Teachers see film after film and enjoy them. But they cannot be expected to realise their teaching value unless they are told what to look for and how the film could be used with different types of classes. If they are not given this guidance by one who knows the film thoroughly and who has had long experience of teaching in a variety of schools, they will go away with a confused mass of impressions and a feeling that educational films are merely an unpractical " stunt."

I seem to hear some of my readers murmuring " Isn't it all an unpractical stunt ? Wasn't this Conference just a gathering of idealists ? How could it have any permanent effect on the educational system of South Africa ? " On the more general question one can only say that General Smuts, General Hertzog, and Mr. Hofmeyr, Minister for Education did not seem to think so, if one may judge by their speeches and by the share they took in the Conference. As to the minor questions in which I was specially interested, all the Provinces are initiating experimental school broadcast lessons. Educational films are a more difficult question, as the expense involved is considerable ; in fact until the International Convention for Free Trade in Educational Films becomes operative, a new and non-producing country can hardly expect to be able to use films in its schools. But the thought of the teachers has been aroused afresh, and in the last resort the use of any aids to education, and indeed the value of education itself, depends on the teacher. It is for that reason, putting aside any question of mechanical aids, that it is safe to say that July, 1934, will remain a key date in the history of South African education.



BATH TIME AT THE ZOO, by Mary Field (G.B. Instructional)

FILMS FOR CHILDREN

By William Farr

THERE must be very few children nowadays who do not visit the cinema at least once a week. The formative influence on the children's characters of what they see is acknowledged to be at least as great as that of their parents, the churches or the schools. But those who have interested themselves most in the problems which these facts present have been content with devising methods of preventing children from seeing films which were never produced for them, but for their parents, rather than with promoting the production of films of positive entertainment value for children.

The general line adopted has been that of censorship, and the limitations of this policy are obvious even to those who advocated it. The division of films into those suitable for universal exhibition and those suitable for exhibition to adult audiences, to which children can only be admitted if accompanied by a parent or guardian, has not even had the negative results which were hoped for. Apart from the difficulty for cinema managers of determining the actual age of children who claim to be sixteen, and the ways in which children find self-appointed guardians outside the cinema, placing on parents the responsibility of deciding whether an "A" film is suitable for their children could hardly work, since most parents do not, cannot, or will not attempt to find out whether the film is suitable or not. Most parents, if they take their children with them, do so because they cannot leave them at home so that, even if they would discriminate, they are more and more forced to take a chance or stay at home, in face of the increasing number of "A" films. The proportion has grown from 43 per cent. in 1930 to 63 per cent. in 1933. But a demand for more " U " films would not improve the situation. At the worst it might only result in the enlargement of the basis of the " U " certificate so that it became meaningless, as happened between 1921, when the Home Secretary issued his recommendation that no children unaccompanied by parent or guardian should be admitted to "A" films, and 1923. Between those years the proportion of " U " films suddenly rose from 50 to 87 per cent. Or it might result in the actual production of less "A" films which would deprive adults of much entertainment which is entirely suitable for them, and the cinema of many of its greatest potential achievements.

Leslie Howard in THE SCARLET PIMPERNEL (London Films)

In concentrating too much on such restrictive measures, taken further by those local authorities who forbid children to see "A" films, and in organising propaganda for " family " films we forget that the best that can be said for most " U " films is that they are not unsuitable for children, and that what are wanted are films positively suitable. Our negative attitude is too narrowly concerned with morality. We forget that our goal should be the production for children of films which, while they entertain, will stimulate intelligence, imagination and sympathy.

The general conclusion of enquiries into the effects of the cinema on children seems to be that expressed in the L.C.C. Report, namely, that the morally questionable elements in films are either not understood or are ignored by children, in fact bore them. The one distinct evil often mentioned is that children are often frightened at the films and that the fear remains with them and causes dreams. There is ample evidence, however, that children, like their adults, know what they like and what they do not like. They like action and excitement ; they dislike sentimentality, however pure, sophisticated comedy, and crooning, and, while they like news and travel films, they object to the intrusion of the classroom into the cinema. Some distinction should be made between boys and girls in their attitude to the actual films which are at present

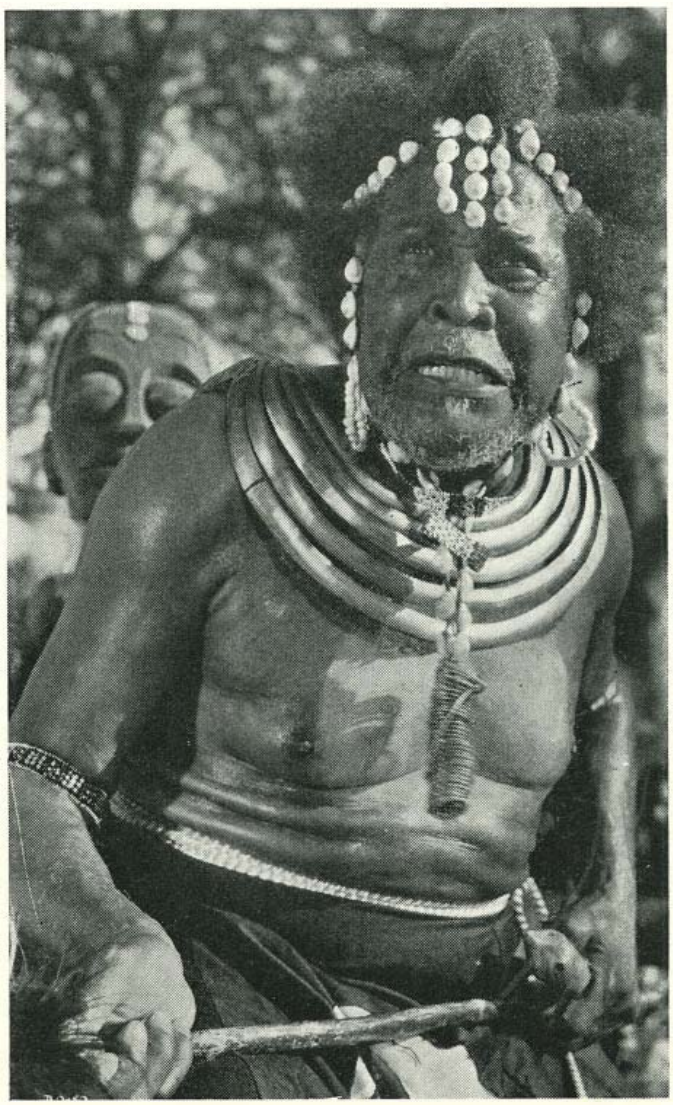
shown to them, but there seem to be common factors in the films which they like which would make possible the production of films which both boys and girls would enjoy.

Building up programmes on what children seem to like, and also on what it has been hoped that children would like if they could only see it, a number of cinemas, voluntary organisations, and individuals have run special children's matinees, sometimes in local cinemas, sometimes in church halls. Such matinees are to be carefully distinguished from the children's matinees run by commercial cinemas on Saturday afternoons, which, although they have decreased, especially in the South of England, since the coming of talkies and the increase in "A" films, are still widespread. To these matinees the children are admitted at very cheap prices, but the programmes usually consist of films being shown at the ordinary performances. Sometimes special films are obtained, but with the cheap prices of admission the profit is so slight as to make this almost impossible. In the great majority of commercial matinees the programme is determined more by consideration of economy and convenience than of the needs and wishes of the children.

But even those cinemas or organisations which wish to provide children with suitable films are now finding it extremely difficult. Since the coming of talkies the supply of suitable feature films has considerably decreased and even those which are suitable cannot easily be obtained. " Westerns " used to fill a large part of the programmes and the children liked them, but to-day, although more " Westerns " are now being produced, they are more sophisticated and contain less action, more dialogue, and some of them even crooning. There are also less of the downright comics ; there are few new Charlie Chaplins, and these too are becoming more sophisticated. Even the Mickey Mouse and Silly Symphony Cartoons, which promised much assistance, are becoming too subtle for children, who understand and prefer the earlier productions. It is true that a number of children's classics have been filmed, but there are not sufficient of them, they are usually treated from an adult angle and liberties are taken in adapting them for the screen, which the children do not appreciate. Finally, it is difficult to obtain them for special performances.

In spite of the difficulties, however, of running children's matinees with specially selected films, an increasing number of attempts are being made to meet the demand for them. During this winter special children's matinees have been organised at the Academy, Oxford Street, the Everyman, Hampstead, the G-B. cinemas in Edinburgh and Glasgow, in Dundee and Bath. All these have been run at commercial cinemas with some sort of local voluntary organisation behind them and on Saturday mornings. But the programmes at all of these tend to contain a large proportion of general interest and even instructional films, and apart from cartoons, very few fictional films, an unbalanced diet on which survival is doubtful. In addition many attempts have been made by Methodist and other church organisations. These non-commercial shows have the advantage of being run very cheaply and in the evenings or Saturday afternoons, which are the times when most children can go to the cinema, but they experience great difficulty in obtaining suitable films. Special children's matinees for specifically educational purposes are not considered here.

It is possible by considering both these types of special matinees to suggest a solution which would meet the growing public demand for films for children. There is a real need for fictional films suitable for children. There is a large potential public for special performances which could and would be organised by voluntary ad hoc organisations throughout the country. If all the admittedly few suitable films were readily available it would be possible now to begin to organise this public. If the public were organised, the films made available, and the cinema owners were willing to make their cinemas available, a large number of such regular performances could be organised. Saturday morning is not, from the children's point of view, the best time



Toto Ware as King Mofloba in SANDERS OF THE RIVER (London Films)

for children's matinees ; in many places it would be impossible to obtain good audiences on Saturday mornings. Saturday afternoon is more suitable, and thousands of children are in the habit already of going to the cinema at that time, but many people would prefer to encourage children to be in the open air on Saturday afternoons. Early evening performances would be the ideal time, but few cinema exhibitors would be able to arrange performances at this time. It would seem that the times for these performances could only be arranged by local committees and exhibitors in consultation. If the cinema owners were not willing to make their cinemas available then voluntary organisations would have to consider equipping further halls and running the performances themselves. But, even supposing these organisations could obtain the films for their halls, it would not be desirable, from anyone's point of view, that children should grow up to expect to find good films only at these halls and at a few specialised cinemas.

These problems must be faced by all concerned. For the children must have their films, entertainment films positively suitable for them. The films will not be produced until the demand is organised on such a scale as to promise some commercial returns to the producer. The first steps towards this end could only be made now by the fullest co-operation between distributors, exhibitors, and the general public. The final solution lies in the response of the producers to the commercial demand which could be created by the co-operation of the other three sections of those who should be concerned with providing suitable films for children, without depriving adults of their legitimate entertainment. When this has been achieved we could turn to running special children's cinemas, which is the obvious goal. We have children's books and children's libraries. Why not children's films and children's cinemas ?

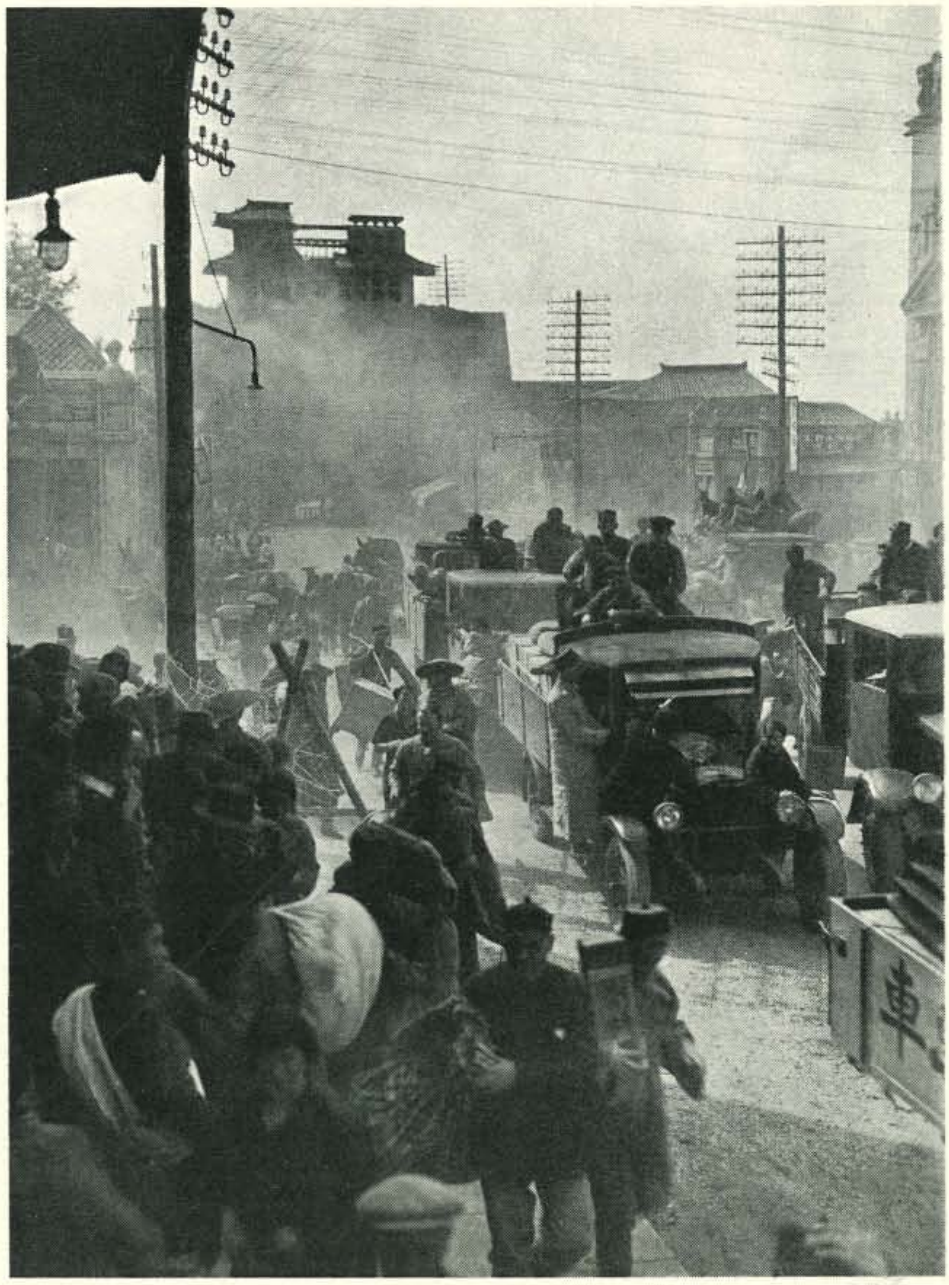
CONTINENTAL FILMS FOR BRITAIN

It is interesting to hear that an independent renting company, Reunion Films Ltd. (Managing Director, Victor Creer), 91, Regent Street, W.1 has recently been formed whose main object is the introduction and distribution of continental films in this country. The first release of the new company was **Young Love (Reka).** This has been followed by **Masquerade in Vienna** made by W. Forst and by **Marie,** a Hungarian Legend starring Annabella. Reunion Films have acquired a number of other pictures including Dostoievsky's **Brothers Karamazov** which was, incidentally, the last film in which Anna Sten acted before leaving for Hollywood. The company states that it has established contact with all the leading European studios and that it intends to select from an extensive production field the best continental pictures and to popularize them among English audiences.

A scene from the Czecho-Slovakian film REKA (YOUNG LOVE) (Reunion Films)

FILMS OF THE QUARTER

By
Alistair Cooke



REFUGEES, directed by Ucicky (Ufa)

MY first reflection on a too ambitious quarter is not a profound one, but it may move somebody to doubting, which is the next best thing to having something to say. It is that Cavalcade and The Private Life of Henry VIII. have between them a lot to answer for. Either of them might have been spared so that we might also have been spared the pre-occupation with Epic which they have unwittingly provoked. The Epic film is now so anxious to be big all the way through that there's not much time or space left over for sensible detail, under-emphasis, or even for humble, adequate acting. At least three of the films it would be irresponsible to overlook imply the tiresome pretence that they were made as Art, as Pageant, as a Page of History and not just as plain movies. And if anybody wants to know what a movie is I should say it is a photographic representation thrown on to a screen, complete with dialogue and sound effects, of a life-like incident treated tragically, comically, whimsically or just left to look after itself. If the two sponsors I have mentioned may soon be recognised for our age what The Green Goddess and A Royal Divorce were for another, we need not worry much about the future of the story-film. But as long as one generation goes on thinking its most lavish platitudes are its best works of art, even though its sons and daughters find them amusing not to say ribald curios, it will remain a critic's duty to try and cure the conceit in his own time.

The worst thing about the pseudo-epic film is not its pompous, amusing little self but the tricks and devices it generates to spawn over the screens of the next decade. And Heaven and perhaps Alexander Korda alone know when we shall no more be asked to consider as lively film material those decorative regiments of courtiers, heavily filtered open air sports—a hunt or the battle of Waterloo, the heraldry-complex of Catherine The Great, the neuroses of mid-Victorians and the private lecheries of kings. From one or more of these at some time or other The Barretts of Wimpole Street, Nell Gwyn, The World Moves On, We Live Again, The Merry Widow and The Iron Duke, all may be

said to suffer; and what's more annoying, they enjoy their suffering.

The comparatively honest The World Moves On survives its grooming; and since not one sparkle of Mr. Lubitsch's burnish is ever accidental, but a part of his conception of 'style,' these two alone are worth examining. The first is one of Fox's now pleasantly acceptable romantic documentaries, twenty years of a family industry on both sides of the Atlantic. The direction of Mr. Berkeley's sermon is neat and flamboyant by turns, of irrelevant incidents it is often precise and moving—the soldier's return to his troop-train, the torpedoeing of the liner. I'm not sure that—as with many consciously anti-war films—it wouldn't serve as effectively as war propaganda—although no contribution to popular idealogy has equalled the ambivalence of Journey's End, for many people stimulant and emetic at the same time. Perhaps the one radical performance in The World Moves On is that of the news-reel insertion. When the story is being coached into effectiveness it is often naïve and maudlin, when it telescopes a parade of armies it does not plead a cause so much as make actual a need.

The Merry Widow is Mr. Lubitsch's essay in the new Thalberg genre—the opera film. As such it is only in the acting—what we shall soon be calling the speaking-intervals—more resourceful than One Night of Love. But as a film directed by Lubitsch it is a portent. Mr. Lubitsch has been careful in his last three films to exercise his suavity in milieux where such dexterity would pass for wit. No director has been more apt to choose characters and situations at exactly the strength of his style. They are as glib, mischievous and amusing as he. But The Merry Widow is too good a book, its story takes uneasily to satirical turns, the nineties was an epoch to enjoy or despise, not to snigger at. And the Lubitsch box of tricks is trivially and self-consciously spilled. No conclusion could better reveal a manner outworn than the end of this film. The elegant jewel-box thrust desperately into a prison cell is as frantic an end as a romantic film could have. Here it is a sign that Mr. Lubitsch has exhausted one manner and must now choose—the dilemma was once Herr Lang's—to abandon his box of tricks and begin again with human beings, or else to fritter away an excellent small talent in more and more mechanical parodies of it. The fade-out was once Mr. Lubitsch's invitation to the audience to share his moue; it is now an interval between a jest and an episode.

Paramount has partly atoned for its irreverence to the Edwardians with The Belle of the Nineties.

George Arliss in THE IRON DUKE, directed by Victor Saville (Gaumont British)

A scene from CARAVAN, directed by Eric Charell (Fox)

Mae West's ripostes are not less good, but they are now always played for and the dialogue sounds like a catechism. But the sets of New Orleans, Mae West's accoutrements as she goes into battle and the choice of cracked and elegant faces are a tribute to Leo McCarey's opinion of the period.

Almost as good an American film as any this quarter has been put out by the modest Reliance Company. The Count of Monte Cristo is a melodrama directed by Rowland Lee with the forceful naiveté that makes his work so endearing. It looks like a silent film that has added its sound, but no one need regret this revived technique as a reversion. Melodrama may yet be the hardest of all forms to represent cinematically; there is a discord difficult to reconcile between the patency of the material and a sophisticated camera. This film does not entertain that discord; it is the old peep-show view of movie, exhilarated by a straightforward, handsome hero, Robert Donat, into whose work is creeping a nice sarcastic poise.

Of the foreign films there have been René Clair's Le Dernier Milliardaire and Ucicky's Refugees. The Clair film was for some people a renewal of faith, for others an exposure. Either way, it is unremarkable except for the incidental satirical experiment with a narrator. The slow panning on to objects already chosen as humorous focal centres is making M. Clair's circumspection a vice. Stranded half-way between Chaplin and Lubitsch he has not the one's human gift of timing, is uneasy to adopt the other's artificial gift of tempo. Ucicky's Refugees is probably the best film we have had. Those who like Wagner's camerawork can here enthuse over as patient a job as Jeanne Ney, a more rounded one than M. The direction is not experimental or even technically curious, but it has a solid anti-graphic quality that gives the film the rare virtue of being difficult to illustrate with a still.

I have left Warner's Admirable Here Comes the Navy because it offers a spring-board into discussion of current documentary and news-reel. Apart from the incomparable American horseplay between James Cagney and that essentially film actor Pat O'Brien, there is a section, exhilaratingly cut, of naval battle manoeuvres. It is a fine example of the most elementary and sensational use of sound—mute and sound galloping together. It is also a better advertisement of the American navy than any news-reel has managed. And Arthur Edeson deserves credit for showing the news-reel cameraman that it is more thrilling to photograph a gun's bowels and then add the sound it makes from the barrel, rather than photograph the barrel itself.

From THE RUGGED ISLAND, by Jenny Brown (Zenifilms)

DOCUMENTARY

The cameramen on the Royal Wedding were hampered by necessary official restrictions from being able to follow Mr. Edeson's example. But all the news-reels were resourceless and disappointing. The panning of packed roofs, awed tracking of royal carriages, inserts of mirrors being used as periscopes, the scene on the balcony—this was the limit of their invention. True, it was a dreadful day and our climate is unkind to cameras, but someone might have prepared a scenario of sorts and made the wedding itself a mere central incident. Paramount's was the best, was also the one most fitted to invite admiration of our gift for pageant—ceremonial manoeuvres were shot at a comprehensive distance. Gaumont-British, on the other hand, were too near, seemed unluckily to be shooting whenever a random horse was moving into place, gave therefore the effect of a casual, under-rehearsed parade.

A film good enough to like for itself that is liable to be loaded with false attributes and de-bunking intentions, is J. N. G. Davidson's Dancers of Aran. Though the technique is sometimes too strong and self-conscious for ' a bit of a dance ' it has a direct realistic knowledge of the people, a friendly desire not to see a homely pastime as the item of a saga. There is a lovely middle section of children running to watch the dance, a quick crescendo of pleasure that may be the first hint of an Irish lyric in cinema.

A more developed and confident lyric is Ragnar Frisk's Song of the Ski, the best documentary of the quarter. Many amateurs have been unable to resist the orgy presented by snow and speed and skis. It has been left to Ragnar Frisk to order this impulse and give us not irrelevant good looks but with the help of delighted cutting a fine exercise instead of a dissipation. A.C.

THE RUGGED ISLAND.

Zenifilms, 3,920 feet. Direction and photography: Jenny Brown; music: Kenneth Leslie-Smith; commentary: Philip Godfrey.

" The scenario of The Rugged Island," says Miss Jenny Brown, " was built around two families, the idea behind the story being to express through these selected lives the story of all the Shetland Island people; the hard struggle for living; the desire of youth, to whom closer contact with the rest of the world through wireless and newspapers has brought unrest and dissatisfaction with a mere existence, to try their luck in a wider sphere; and the difficulties that bar their way, lack of actual money and the dependence of the old folk, who have grown prematurely old in their battle to win food and clothing from sea and land."

Without this very explicit statement in the programme one doubts if even the most sensitive of film-goers would have discerned so much beneath the surface of Miss Brown's picturesque " idyll." It consists of a series of Shetland scenes, the rocky coastline, crofters and sheep-folds, fishing and peat-stacking, linked together by a simple and somewhat naïvely presented love story between two very self-conscious islanders and a spoken commentary that alternates with music. The photography is lovely; quiet and low-pitched after the wild grandeur of Flaherty's Aran, but always satisfying to the eye, and each scene has a lyric movement of its own, complete in itself. As a picture of Shetland life it is delightful, but it lacks cohesion and it conveys little or nothing of the privations and unrest that the director set out to express. The whole burden of this central theme has been left to the love story, which is much too slender to carry it, but inevitably assumes too much importance in the film; the island recedes into the background and all we see is the romance of John and Enga, who might belong to Somerset or Russia or the Middle West, or any other rustic location for all the difference that it would make to us.

There is still a great deal of argument about the exact meaning of the term " documentary film," and this is scarcely the place for an attempt to define its limitations; but it seems clear that the treatment of the human element is the deciding factor, rather than the overlapping divisions of fact and fiction, abstract and concrete, educational and entertainment, by which we generally try to distinguish the categories of our more serious productions. A director may introduce people into a documentary film to illustrate

From DANCERS OF ARAN, by J. N. G. Davidson (Zenifilms)

his theme, but his approach to them will be impersonal and they will not assume for the audience the subjective reality which it is the aim of the "theatrical" director to produce.

For instance, the people in Man of Aran merge into the scene; they are types, or rather personifications of their surroundings, called up by the creator of the picture to play in human action the drama of the island. A closer approach on the director's part would have been fatal to the composition of the film, as it has been in The Rugged Island. Not many directors have succeeded in expressing an impersonal theme clearly and unmistakably in terms of camera and screen; even in the simplified scale of Miss Brown's work cinematography is a heavy and unmalleable medium, and few have mastered it sufficiently to be able to work and shape it into the lucid expression of such a subject.

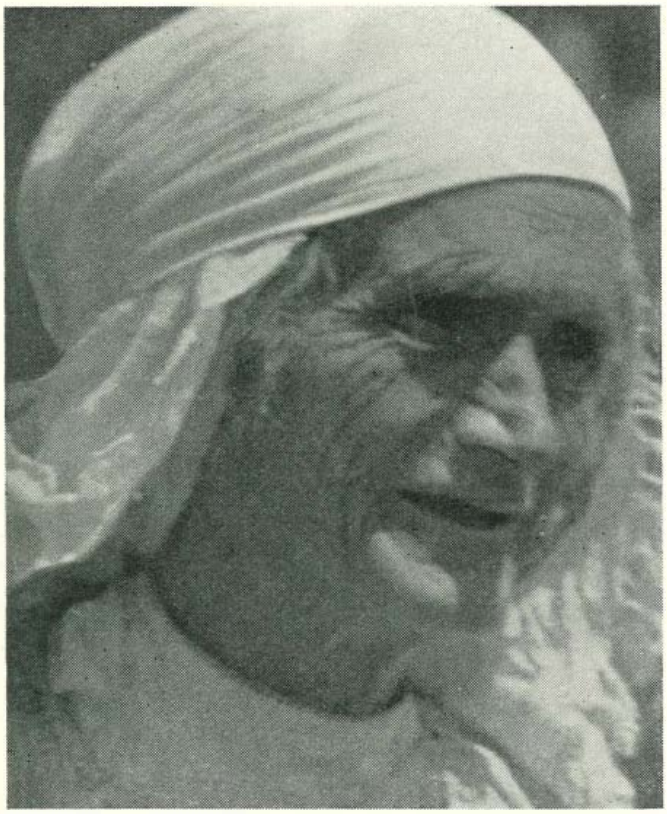
It is a curious fact that it has not yielded pure abstractions in the hands of the women directors of documentary in this country: Mary Field turns her animals into comic characters; Monsieur Stéphan dominates her French class, and Evelyn Spice, Marion Grierson and Jenny Brown have all fallen back on the human element as a means of expressing their themes in the most vivid and acceptable form. The practical reasons are obvious: there are audiences who will never see drama in the flight of a sea-gull or the gnarled and wind-swept shape of a tree, but who will readily respond to the same idea expressed in terms of a thwarted love affair between two attractive young people. But unless the photography has been so shaped that every shot plays its effective part in the development of its central theme, the documentary loses all shape and purpose and becomes merely a stop-gap, a travelogue, or, in this case, an idyll in a picturesque setting. The Rugged Island was meant to be something more than that, and some day Miss Brown will give us the real picture of the Shetlands for which we are waiting. Y.M.R.

THE DOOR IN THE WALL. (Wytham Country Classrooms Scheme). Production: Colonel Raymond ffennell; photography: G. L. Hawkins; 16 mm. Silent; 65 mins.

The film begins in the playground of an Oxford school from which children are taken by bus to the Wytham Estate, where a number of classrooms have been built in healthy, beautiful surroundings. The children work indoors or out-of-doors, according to the weather; they play and rest after the mid-day meal; they can visit the farm and look down, in one direction, over Oxford, and in another, towards the source of the Thames. The film is largely sub-titled with extracts from official reports and children's letters testifying to the value of the experiment. The film has been produced to present what has been done at Wytham and to stimulate interest in the possibility of developing similar schemes throughout the country. It is well photographed, but is too long for popular exhibition. It would be of interest to teachers and may be borrowed by approved organisations. Applications should be made to the inaugurator of the scheme and producer of the film: Colonel Raymond ffennell, Wytham Abbey, Nr. Oxford. W.F.

SONG OF CEYLON. Production: G.P.O. (John Grierson). Direction and photography: Basil Wright; assistant direction: John Taylor; music: Walter Leigh; length: approx. 3,500 ft. Certificate 'U.'; distributors: New Era.

Basil Wright's Song of Ceylon was shown to the Film Society on Sunday, December 16th. The film is divided into four sections (1) The Buddha, (2) The Virgin Island, (3) The Voices of Commerce, (4) The Apparel of a God. The first two sections show the native culture and economy of Ceylon, the third suggests the new perspective created by the coming of modern commerce, and the fourth asserts the continuity of life and tradition. The photography and editing are excellent throughout, particularly some of the detail photography of the statues of Buddha and the sacred dancers in their full robes. The use of synchronised sound effects in Section III, where market quotations, stock exchange prices, syrens, etc., accompany views of natives at work is particularly interesting and will no doubt provoke comment. More debatable perhaps is the use of a commentary written by Robert Knox in 1680 to accompany the other three sections.



SHQYPNIA (Zenifilms)

There is the obvious possibility that the film has been shaped to the commentary; only Basil Wright and those who know Ceylon can judge whether this has resulted in any distortion. The Song of Ceylon establishes Basil Wright as a sincere and imaginative director of documentary films and should achieve wide popularity.

As a travel film and presentation of the island of Ceylon it stands in a class by itself. W.F.

DEUTSCHLAND ZWISCHEN GESTERN UND HEUTE. (German) Production: Kulturfilmbühne (Hanover); direction: Wilfried Basse; music: Wolfgang Zeller; Klangfilm recording: 35 mm.; about 7,000 feet; distribution: Film Society.

If one were asked to suggest an English title to this film it would be "The Essential Germany."

Basse has cast his eye over present-day Germany and found that its life could conveniently be grouped in a series of sections of rising complexity with increasing mechanisation. These sections are clearly not intended to represent strata, or classes, for they overlap a great deal, merging, as it were, in an upward progression. He begins with the people closest to the land, the peasants, the individualist small-holders and the general population of the countryside. The land-produce then goes to town and logically he goes on to deal with one of those little market towns which one finds spread right across Germany, each of them retaining its traces of feudalism. Then there follow, roughly in order, an old medieval city with its rich traces of Gothic, said to have been recognised as Hildesheim, a city of the Hanseatic League, a typical "Bischofshof," and a University city, before coming to the scattered pleasure resorts and open-air camps so frequent in Germany, and passing finally to modern industrial and sea-port life.

Throughout, Basse has taken and assembled his material with a Teutonic sureness of touch and yet with an almost Gallic sense of humour. His camera picks out the whimsies of old surviving customs, smiling at those little fetishes and costume-parades which every tourist likes to find associated with civic and with University life. Strangely enough, knowing present political conditions in Germany and the tendency to reinstate medieval rites in the public life, he is allowed to get away with it. He can be wicked, too, with physical disabilities, and one cannot easily forget the little cafe scene with the Pekinese and its owner.

Only in the last reel does one sense an ulterior motive. In dealing with the industrial conditions Basse has been quite honest about unemployment. It seems to rise logically from all that has gone before. He has shown the anachronisms of the towns and villages and now he finds that there are other anachronisms in the city conditions which aggravate them. The final touch is of these men, instead of being allowed to stagnate, being recruited for useful work which needs doing—enrolled in a Labour Corps, housed, fed, clothed and paid. That is to-day's contribution to the problem in Germany. That is why one would say that this film gets down to the essential Germany. It is only briefly concerned with the panaceas of to-day: its chief concern is with the German life which goes on beneath it and which in many cases has gone on along the same lines for centuries.

The fact that the film is in sections makes one suggest that it might have more than a "travelogue" or "highbrow" usefulness. There is a great deal of material in some of the sections which ought to come in useful for senior and adult education purposes.

Would that someone would look at England, or any other country or community (the more the better) and produce a film with such a spirit and such a touch. Perhaps either Flaherty, Grierson, Rotha or Wright may yet come to a documentation of the national life . . . ? D.F.R.

THUNDER IN THE AIR (British). Production, scenario & direction: Hans Nieter; photography: Bert Hopkins & Reg Wyre; featuring Ralph Richardson & Hilary Eves. Sound: 35 mm.; 3,000 feet; 'A' certificate; distribution: Butchers.

In this forceful attack on the arms racket, Nieter has evolved a most interesting scenario from the use of news-reel, documentary and some fictional material, his blending process being assisted by an ingenious use of sound.

The 'dialectic' of the production is contained in Vernon Bartlett's commentary, which is intermittent, the visuals being used as *points d'appui*. The fictional passages, with their dialogue and satirical sounds, therefore assume more of a

rhetorical, or emphasising value, calculated to make the film acceptable as entertainment. There is a striking sequence which begins with a telephone conversation about a rise in armaments shares meaning better business: the word "business" goes on repeating, with a hint of weariness—"Business . . . Business . . . Business . . ." while its whole ghastly havoc is being paraded across the screen. There is an absolute minimum of sheer horror, the drilling and marching of war preparation and then the stagnation and unemployment of the aftermath being left to tell their own tale of the intervening years, assisted only by a very brief dramatisation of a single instance of family grief.

The directness of its approach makes it seem a little crude in parts, but it relates the general problem without superfluity to the every-day problems of the present time and so gains a wide and topical significance. The photographic quality is surprisingly even, considering the variety of material used, and the sound recording, except momentarily, is quite good. D.F.R.

FORGOTTEN MEN (British.) Production: Associated British Pictures; direction: Norman Lee; with an introduction by General Sir Ian Hamilton and a commentary by Sir John Hammerton. Sound: 35 mm.; 7,138 feet; certifcate 'A'; distribution: Wardour.

War, and particularly the war of 1914-1918, here provides the theme for another and much more pitiless use of documentary in the anti-war cause. Norman Lee has selected his news-reel stuff, added bits of commentary and super-imposed 'realistic' war sounds and then interspersed with it some brief appearances by a group of famous V.C.'s. It need hardly be said that this is a commercial production. As such it will succeed, but as such it purposely blinds itself to causes and effects and confines itself to an emotional attack—in which absolutely nothing from mass destruction to individual agony is spared to the audience. Some of the scenes are literally so terrible that nobody under twenty should be allowed to see the film. Would, however, that it had gone just a step further than braying "No more war" and had got as far as making some constructive suggestion, even so non-committal a statement as that friendship, understanding and co-operation between the peoples are the only way to avoid such ghastly, futile havoc as the last war is here shown to have been. D.F.R.

SHQYPNIA, Land of the Mountain Eagle—Albania (British). Direction & photography: L. G. Barbrook; commentary: E. le Breton Martin; musical arrangement: Beresford Kent. Sound: 35 mm.; 1,750 feet; 'U' certificate; distribution: Zenifilms.

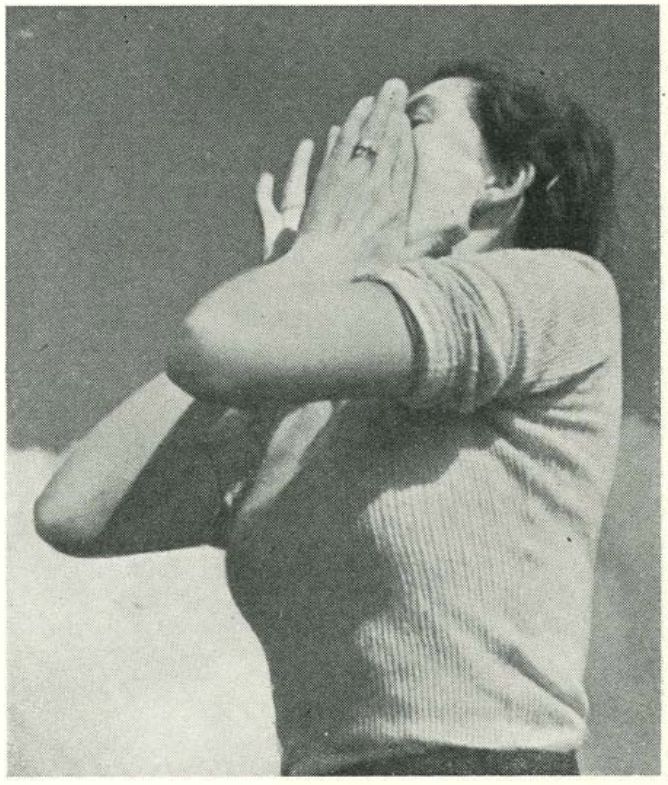
As the commentator begins by remarking, the popular conception of Albania is of a brigand-infested country of mountains and forests. Unfortunately the film then seems to set out to destroy this ignorant belief by ignoring, not only brigands, but also the mountains and forests. We are, however, treated to an unpretentious and rather fine essay on the pastoral and self-sufficing nature of this Moslem country. This may or may not be the first film of Albania; it has certainly taken the people as found, and not bribed them with the local *denarii*, in tourist-travelogue fashion, to pose. The photography, music and informative commentary are equally discreet, leaving one to enjoy the passing scene in comparative peace. D.F.R.

BEYOND THIS OPEN ROAD (British). Production: Film Art Group; direction: B. Vivian Braun & Irene Nicholson; photography: Braun. Silent: 35 mm.; 1,000 feet.

One can only admire this for an amateur production made in thirteen days with a hand camera, only 500 feet of negative being discarded. It was, however, not too clear where everything was getting to. There was a great pother of starting hikers, bikers and motorists pouring eventually down arterial roads, but they somehow evaporated into two or three people posed, in walking or cycling garb, against darkening skies. Goodness only knows what had happened to all the original fine fervour for movement. Some of the camera-work was very commendable. D.F.R.

CARTOONS AND ANIMATIONS

Disney's Orphans' Benefit has already received quite a bit of notice for a promisingly obstreperous duckling and for a singing hen in the best operatic tradition. It is good to see him breaking fresh ground, for others are pressing up with new ideas.



BEYOND THIS OPEN ROAD (Film Art Group)

The Joie de Vivre of Hector Hoppin and Anthony Gross suffers, perhaps, from a plenitude of ideas and its authors may later regret their liberality in the first effort unless they have found a store of "business" as fresh as their draughtsmanship. Night on the Bare Mountain introduces a new plastic technique which results in a sort of "animated engraving" effect. Moussorgsky's music and the impressionist visuals, however, made it difficult to assess at a single viewing.

A couple of experiments in Gasparcolor from the hands of Oscar Fischinger have recently been seen. Kreise was only long enough to indicate exciting results from the use of colour in his Lichtertanz exercises, in this case with part of the Tannhaüser overture. His short advertisement film contained an uncanny manipulation of battalions of cigarettes, some of the massed rhythmic movements even threatening Hollywood's most ravishing choreography—with handfuls of cigarettes. The history of wheels as applied to road transport gives Lotte Reiniger's silhouette figures an opportunity in Das Rollende Rad to amuse as well as to instruct. The periods are most faithfully conveyed by costumes and architecture and the picture suggests possibilities for further use of the animated silhouette in instructional films. D.F.R.

AMATEURS' FILM OF SLUM LIFE

The Bolton Amateur Cine Association is making a film of slum life which is to be entitled **Gehenna in Britain.**

The film is being shot on 16 mm. stock and, when finished, will be about 500 feet in length. It is written in the "dramatic documentary" manner, that is to say, the story runs through by means of the relations between shots, rather than by sub-titles. The problem of slum clearance is treated from the children's point of view only. It shows how bad conditions militate against the good up-bringing of the children, and how they are unable to put into practice the lessons they learn at the present much improved schools. The film touches on bad living conditions, overcrowding and bad sanitation. It gives, as a contrast, the better conditions prevailing in the new housing schemes and flats, and how, in these new conditions, the children have, at least, a chance to become good citizens.

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTE OF SCOTLAND'S YOUTH HOSTEL FILM

With the opening, in the spring of 1934, of the Educational Institute of Scotland's Hostel at Cambusbarron, near Stirling, there was brought to fruition a project which had occupied the attention of E.I.S. members for several years, viz., the provision of a Hostel which would cater expressly for parties of school children in organised groups under the charge of their teachers.

In connection with a publicity campaign among E.I.S. members to make the advantages of the Hostel more widely known, not the least effective agent of propaganda is the film, **Cambusbarron Hostel.**

The opening shots show some senior schoolboys in consultation regarding a camping holiday. With plans still undecided, they drop in to the local cinema, where the News Reel includes the opening ceremony at Cambusbarron Hostel. This decides them to give the Hostel a trial, and they are next seen en route for Cambusbarron, where they are duly welcomed by the Camp Officers. The remainder of the film depicts their various experiences. Effective shots of the preparation of food in the kitchen, of the party at lunch in the Dining Hall, of the "Camp Fire" sing-song after supper, and of the boys retiring to rest in their cubicles, vividly portray the internal organisation. A lively party in the bathing-pool and an escorted trek to

View of Hostel at Cambusbarron

Stirling Castle serve to indicate the variety of entertainment provided for the residents. The film ends on the departure of the satisfied visitors, declaring their intention of returning at an early date.

The entire film is the work of Mr. James Glasgow, of the Neo-Art Film Studio, Paisley, who was responsible for scenario, filming, cutting and titling. It was shot on 16 mm. Selo Hypersen stock, the camera being a Cine Kodak Special. The interiors were taken without the aid of artificial lighting, excepting the shots in the cubicles, where a Kodalite with two 500 watt bulbs was used.

The quality of the film, *per se*, is very high. The effective selection of material and the artistic quality of many of the shots combine to make the film an interesting one, even to those who have no concern with its subject-matter.

TO THE EDITOR

Films and Peace

Dear Sir,

Every schoolboy sums up a peculiar feeling in the formula (approximate) :—

1 Englishman
= 2 Scotsmen,
= 5 Frenchmen,
= 10 Americans,
= 100 Chinamen,
and so on *ad lib.*

No amount of "the reality of mud and dust and bloody sweat" will destroy the feeling from which that treasured formula springs. A certain amount is a good antiseptic, but it is only when he has seen that the Frenchman is not a frog-like creature, nor the Chinaman some kind of a vegetable, that your schoolboy—and your adult—approaches to a human being.

The film is *the one medium* which, above all others, is peculiarly suited to the colossal job of debunking such stupid ideas and to the substituting of a sympathetic understanding of the other man's point of view. If he will shake himself clear of the parochialism which befogged his article in your autumn number, I am sure Sydney will agree with me that *that* is the fundamental necessity of our day and age.

There is no glory about fighting fellow human-beings : it is only in fighting "enemies." Promote understanding among men, and that unreasoning type of fear which leads to the mass-hysteria we call war is sublimated into constructive, co-operative citizenship. It is on the securing of just such positive advances that the policy underlying the film work of the League of Nations Union is based, as it is with all its other educational work. The actual production of films is only an expensive incidental to the optimum use of extant film material, forced upon us by crying gaps in that material with regard to our special function.

Yours, etc.,
DAVID RITCHIE
Cinema Representative, League of Nations Union

FILMS AND THE SCHOOL **A SECTION FOR EDUCATIONISTS**

THE PROJECTOR IN THE CLASSROOM

By F. A. Ring

This is the first of a series of articles each written by a teacher who is accustomed to use the film in teaching. All types of schools will be dealt with in the series.

THESE notes attempt no more than to set out in simple language the experiences of a large suburban boys' school during the months subsequent to receiving a generous gift of a Kodascope. The school is as yet unreorganised and the staff had no previous knowledge of the practical use of the film as an educational medium, apart from that gained from occasional visits to mass demonstrations at local cinemas. The results of these months of experiment may be helpful to other schools which hesitate for lack of knowledge to risk their slender funds in the purchase of an instrument that might prove less useful than they desire.

The school is wired for electric light, and the local education authority readily agreed to install the necessary plug, dark blinds and screen. A large classroom was adapted as film-room, the sheet being fitted on rollers at one narrow end, and the projector operated from the opposite side. This made possible a picture six feet square—quite adequate for the class to view without discomfort due either to crowding or to too close proximity to the screen. Messrs. Kodak very courteously sent a representative to demonstrate the handling of the machine, one lesson proving sufficient for the novices to grasp the idea.

Naturally the scholars were intrigued by the innovation and, equally naturally, they did not at first appreciate that there was serious purpose behind the arrangements. Within a fortnight, however, every class had come to understand that the new method was not to be regarded as merely a pleasant way of passing the time. Judicious questioning while a film was being rewound—the proportion of unsatisfactory replies after a first showing was surprisingly large—followed by subsequent classroom discussion, quickly brought even the small lads to realise that they were expected to give close attention to what they were shown, and to *see* the pictures as well as to *look* at them.

In the early days, a desire that all classes who might conceivably benefit should see a film whilst it was available led to its being shown to two classes at the same time. That was a mistake, for the difference in mentality combined with an over-heated atmosphere and inconvenience of seating accommodation minimised, if it did not entirely eliminate, the value of the lesson. Now it is a pretty general rule to show to only one class at a time. Experience has shown the desirability of having two members of the staff present, for one must be able to give undivided attention to the machine. In schools where there is a teacher additional to the number of classes, this problem is simplified; otherwise there must be some inevitable inconvenience to the staff, particularly where, as in this school, the film-room is in regular use by a class. But cheerful forebearance has been the order of the day, and in the light of experience some adjustment to time tables, together with arrangements for showing films on the same day in every week have greatly eased the position.

Choice of films provided a problem, for cost of hire was a distinct difficulty, since the school's available funds were very small. The G.P.O. Film Library was used as the main source of supply. Here, carriage both ways is the only charge. Occasionally a reel or two was secured from one or other of the commercial films. Since the experiment began without more than a month's notice, only rarely did a film fit into the syllabus appropriately. But the number of films viewed during those early months has made possible a definite plan of booking for the current school year. The great demand through the country makes it necessary for films to be ordered many months in advance if they are to be available at the most opportune time.

Apart from hire of films, the running costs have been small, for replacement of a lamp has been the only charge. The projector uses a 100 v. 300 watt. lamp, costing 26/-, and the first one had a life of about 120 hours. As education authorities and schools come more widely to realise the advantages of the classroom film, it will be necessary for this question of expense to be settled along general lines of policy. The individual school should not be expected to provide its teaching apparatus from school funds. Some provision in excess of the normal requisition allowance is called for and, in the case under review, is permitted.

The question of providing a suitable commentary quickly solved itself, for the teachers found no difficulty in adapting their language to the capacity of the audience, so long as only one class was being dealt with at a time. It was generally agreed that observations were best confined to essentials as they appeared on the screen—that a flow of unceasing talk not only missed its objective but distracted attention from the film itself. Various experiments were tried with caption-reading, and it was found that small boys got most out of the headings if they

SPRING ON THE FARM (G.P.O.)

read them in chorus, whilst older lads preferred the best reader in the class to enunciate. One point stood out very clearly, that there is absolute necessity for some form of teachers' notes to accompany every film. Circumstances make it practically impossible for the master to view every film before showing it to a class. Yet preliminary knowledge of its contents, and some observations in connection with it, are essential to any satisfactory commentary. Informative leaflets were issued with the E.M.B. posters : now that the Post Office has inherited the Film Library, cannot the G.P.O. follow the excellent example of some of the film-producing companies, and supply teaching notes to accompany the films ?

Worked under conditions that were far from ideal, it was not anticipated that satisfactory results would show themselves in the early stages, yet careful enquiry produced evidence of a very encouraging nature. On different occasions the method of showing was varied. Sometimes two or even three films would be run through, but it quickly became apparent that this was educationally wasteful. There was general agreement that a single film shown twice was much more advantageous. A 15 minute reel proved quite long enough for older lads, and 10 minutes with juniors was sufficient. After some months, a series of tests was set to classes of normal and sub-normal children. Each set of questions contained two sections, one based entirely upon the ordinary class teaching, and the other upon the film lessons. With both types of child the latter were answered better, the improvement with sub-normal children being about 20 per cent. To dogmatise from this would, of course, be dangerous, though it was interesting to note that it tended to confirm one of the experiences of the Committee which ran the Middlesex Experiment.

Questioned about the sort of film they liked best, the children voted strongly for those of the cartoon type, and certainly their recollection of essentials was clearest in connection with that type. Next in popularity came animal pictures, with sea-fishing close behind. Scenery made little appeal, and rather surprisingly, winter sports films proved only mildly attractive. Encouraged to express opinions about what they saw, many lads did so frankly and a common criticism was that the titles were misleading or created expectations which were not satisfied. Sometimes a boy wanted to know why an alleged witticism had been included in a caption ; only rarely was levity appreciated.

No attempt has been made here to assess the quality of the available films. That some of them are of little real educational value is undoubtedly true, some would be greatly improved by re-editing and many suffer from defects of crudeness, faulty emphasis or poor photography. But the output of excellent films is rapidly increasing and the question of supply is well on the way to being solved. Doubtless the British Film Institute will be giving serious consideration to the question of sound versus silent films. This experiment was concerned only with silent films, so it would be improper to discuss the wider question here. But, whether sound or silent,

the classroom film has proved its value as a teaching medium. It has proved also that in no sense does it compete with the entertainment film of the public cinema. Perhaps the most significant feature of this experiment has been the evidence it has afforded of the vastly different attitude of mind displayed by the scholars towards the classroom film and the cinema. They approach the school film-room with an alertness that indicates an intention to exercise their wits to the full. To the cinema, their attitude is far more casual, in the knowledge that what is offered may be accepted or rejected at will, and that in either case there will be no testing of their powers of concentration.

EDUCATIONAL SOUND FILMS
WESTERN ELECTRIC ROAD SHOW SERVICE

A library of particular interest to teachers is being built up by Messrs. Western Electric for use in their hiring service. The films are drawn from three sources : from adaptable theatrical material, such as **Aniakchak ;** special educational films being produced in this and other countries : and documentary film material, such as the film of the 1933 Everest expedition. The range of the library is a wide one, covering physics, music, religion, travel and exploration, astronomy, and modern history. Of particular interest, in view of the lack of suitable films of the kind elsewhere, is the group on music illustrating the construction of a symphony orchestra. There is also a valuable series on modern affairs, comprising **Europe Today,** with a commentary by Mr. Vernon Bartlett ; **Will Civilisation Crash ?** an interview with Professor C. E. M. Joad ; and a series of **Three Minute Films : Pacific Problems, New Europe** and **Opening Up the Sahara.**

These last three are from a group of French instructional films, remarkable for their effective use of the cine-diagram for instructional purposes. (They have been reviewed both in SIGHT AND SOUND p. 73, and in the B.F.I's Monthly Film Bulletin Vol. 1, No. 10). Good entertainment films are also a feature of the Western Electric Library : **Kameradschaft** is one of the best examples. The two latest additions to the Library are **Young Things,** a film of young animals, and **The County of the White Rose,** a delightful film of Yorkshire.

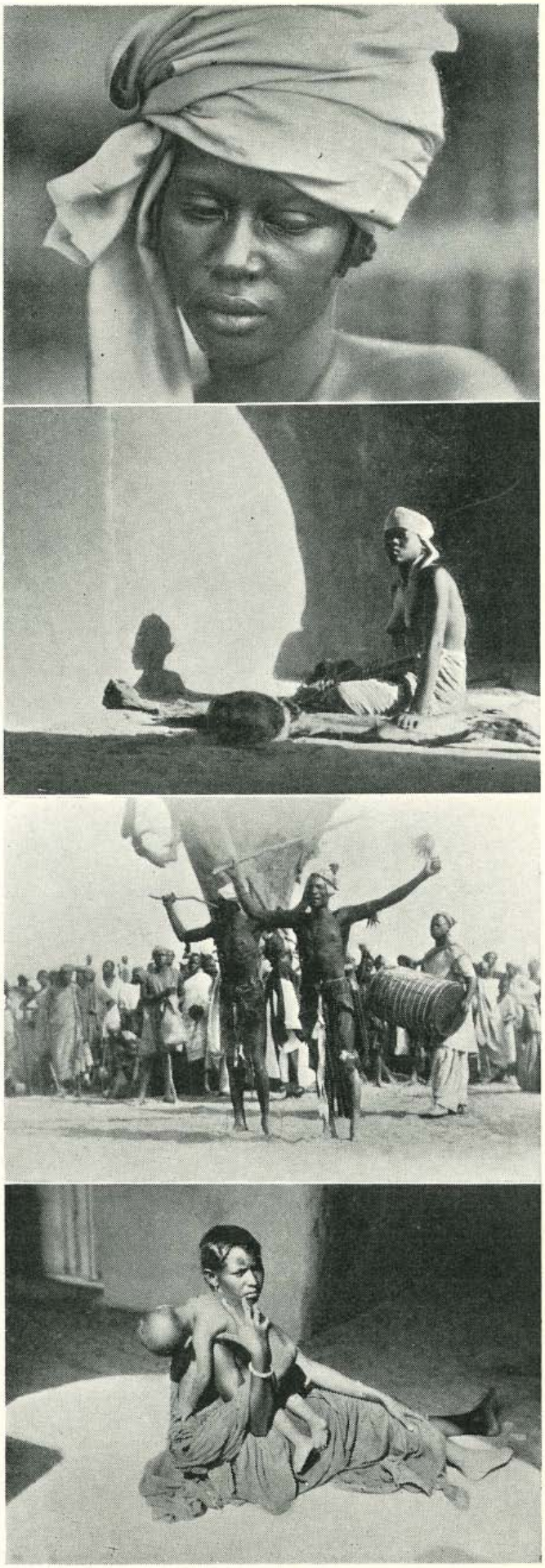
Demonstrations of the Western Electric Service have been held at Edinburgh, Glasgow, Motherwell, Aberdeen, Dorchester and Leeds, and the comments of teachers present have on each occasion been encouraging. The Western Electric Company has fifteen key centres throughout the country and can supply films, equipment and operator at a moderate charge. They can show films in any hall, and are equipped at the moment to give from two to three thousand shows per month.

NEW G.B.I. FILMS

Messrs. G. B. Instructional are making considerable progress with their scheme of production of educational films. One of the most interesting developments is the launching of a new series, **Eminent Scientists,** produced in collaboration with the Institute of Electrical Engineers.

The Amoeba, the first of a series of films to be used in biological teaching, is now available. This and **Fruitlands of Kent,** a film demonstrating the conditions of fruit growing on a large and small scale, and **How Talkies Talk,** explaining how sound is photographed in the studio and reproduced in the theatre, were screened at the demonstration of educational films organised at the Phœnix Theatre on January 5th in connection with the 23rd Annual Conference of Educational Associations.

Other new films are, **A Little Known London Industry,** showing the manufacture of liner propellors, and three films supervised by Professor E. J. Salisbury, **The Cabbage, Roots, White Flies and Tomatoes.** A Series of six reel films on **Lawn Tennis** is also planned showing correct stroke production as exemplified by a number of famous players. It is interesting to note too, that six further reels are to be added to the successful **Wheatlands of East Anglia.**



CITIES OF THE DESERT (L.M.B.)

THE EDUCATIONAL FILM IN SCOTLAND

By Thomas Blake, President, Scottish Educational Cinema Society

SCOTTISH teachers have welcomed the great improvement in the quality and the large increase in quantity that has taken place recently in educational films. But from the classroom point of view there are very few educational films. There are instead many good interest films, touching on subjects which come definitely within the curriculum. Thus, there are some very good industrial films and some good films depicting scenes and incidents in various parts of the world, especially the frozen north. There are some films of great beauty showing sea and cliff and sea-bird life. And there are films of animal life in the far-off corners of the world. We can sail up the Amazon and round the minor islands of the West Indies. We can visit the " houses on stilts " of the natives of Papua. We can fish with the Eskimo and shoot crocodiles on the upper reaches of the Nile. In fact, we are beginning to feel quite at home furth of Scotland.

Now this is all very good in its way. It is very interesting to children, most of it makes excellent teaching material and is well worth showing to our classes. They will, I am sure, always have their place in our schools.

But Scottish teachers have some quite definite teaching work for the film to do. (Let me not be misunderstood when I use the term " teaching work." A teaching film does not teach. It may teach, as every picture teaches, but that is not its purpose. Its real purpose in the classroom is to illustrate what is being taught.) Even if the types of film mentioned above were perfect of their kind, our teachers would not be satisfied. Just as at the right moment the teacher hangs up his map or diagram, or hands round pictures or postcards when he is teaching a lesson on, let us say, the Sahara Desert, so he wants to be able to run through his film just at the psychological moment, making the film illustrate his lesson. At present he cannot do this. Almost always he has to prepare his lesson to explain the film. There is a lack of definiteness about most educational films. Often extraneous matter is introduced ; and not infrequently the incidental becomes more interesting than the general topic of the film. Teachers and pupils cannot afford to waste time on an intolerable deal of interest. They want more than a "ha'porth o' bread."

Things far-away are always of great interest to children. In a way they add romance to the classroom. But things near at hand, in their own town or village, and in their own country are much more important and no less romantic. Experience reaches outward from the world at our doors. It is just here that Scottish teachers find themselves in a serious difficulty, for the supply of films suitable for their purpose is negligible. There is no teaching film of the Clyde from source to Firth, nor of Clyde shipbuilding, Lanarkshire coal-mining, or the brown squirrel, to mention only a few. Perhaps the teachers will have to make these for themselves ; I don't know. But they will have to be made before the film can take its rightful place in our schools. It is all a question of relative importance. What is of first-rate value to the teacher in one area may be of only second-rate value to the teacher in another. Thus a film of the Thames might be more important to London than a film of the Clyde. Salmon fishing is, no doubt, a very important industry in Canada. But in our part of the world it does not assume the importance of the engineering, ship-building, and the textile industries. We give very detailed lessons on these in our Scottish schools, and we should have scores of films dealing with them. Instead, we sail up the Amazon and fly along the Nile ; we study puffins on Bonaventure ; we roam round the world for our films instead of finding them in Scotland.

Teachers in Scotland are, however, pleased with the progress made. Though they are continually pointing out the great big gaps in the catalogue, they are deeply grateful for those films they have been showing in their schools, for through them they have been able to clarify their own conceptions regarding the use of the film for schoolroom purposes. They have learned that the film has an important part to play as a teaching aid ; that there are subjects and parts of subjects which lend themselves to film presentation ; that the film cannot do everything ; and that so far as other mechanical aids are concerned, there will be no evictions meantime. But some pertinent questions will have to be answered before a film technique can be evolved. At the moment there are signs all over of a great interest. Membership of the Scottish Educational Film Association is growing rapidly. New groups and branches are being formed and meetings for demonstration and discussion are better attended than ever they were. They are cutting, editing, re-titling and making films. And they are encouraged to go on, knowing that the film-trade is genuinely interested and is anxious to produce really good films for teaching purposes. Confidence has at last been gained. All this, taken in conjunction with the sympathetic and practical interest shown by many of the Education Committees, augurs well for the immediate future of the educational film in Scotland.

N.B. The Scottish Educational Cinema Society is uniting with the Scottish Sight and Sound Society to form a new organisation called the Scottish Educational Film Association.

TEACHING SCIENCE BY FILM

By Ronald Steuart
Managing Director, Steuart Films, Ltd.

THE PRODUCER'S POINT OF VIEW

AT the very outset, I should like to make it quite clear that by a " teaching film " I do not mean an " educational," " instructional " or " interest " film, as generally understood by the makers and users of such ; but one which has been designed and made to use solely in the classroom or lecture theatre.

Before setting out to make a " teaching film," let us see how the film can be of any greater help to the student than a text book.

Analyse, for a moment, the instantaneous and subconscious mental process of the student reading a text book. He sees before him a collection of signs ; these are translated into letters and then into a word. This process is repeated for each word. The word is then given a meaning by the brain, and for each collection of words, or sentence, a collective meaning must be supplied.

Though all this takes only a fraction of a second in the brain, yet it is a positive mental effort which can be enormously reduced if the written description in the text book is translated into visual images on the screen ; for here there are only two mental efforts necessary, that of seeing, and that of registering the significance of what is seen on the brain.

Again, if from the text book the student is trying to imagine an object which he has never seen, it is more than likely that he will imagine it incorrectly. This is a serious danger, because the first mental picture is always the strongest. Further mental effort will be required to forget the wrong impression, and a still further effort needed to register the new and correct idea ; but the film conveys the correct idea from the outset.

All this perhaps sounds a trifle far-fetched, but spread over the average working day of a student, the aggregate mental effort is considerable, and does definitely tend to reduce his efficiency.

How is the film to be used ? As an introduction, an illustration with the lecture, or as a recapitulation at the end ? Is it to be used in conjunction with an existing text book ? How long is it to last ?

Broadly speaking, the film can be shown only to one standard of student, if the greatest efficiency is to be obtained. The other points require a great deal of thought and need very close co-operation between producer and teacher, and it is the teacher who must decide upon the final presentation of the film.

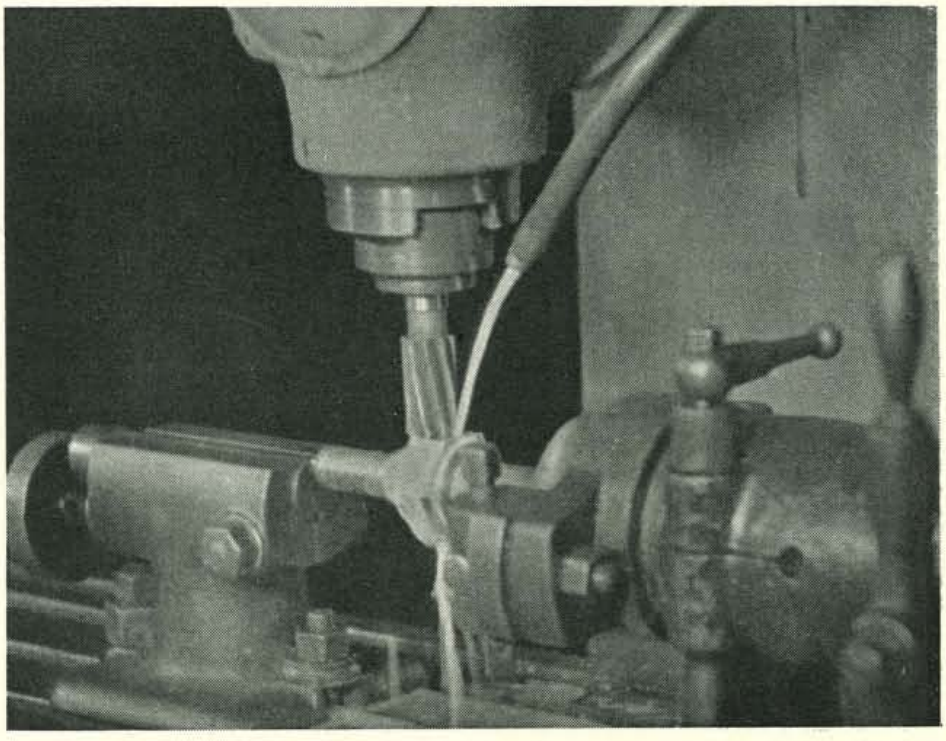
The teaching film can never take the place of the teacher, because a good teacher can " sense " his class and adapt the presentation of his lecture to suit that class, whereas once a film is made, its presentation is fixed for all classes for all time.

The film is a liaison between teacher and pupil, and should not attempt to be anything more.

A film is a very concentrated dose, and great care should be exercised not to put too much subject matter into it ; it is better divided into several parts than overcrowded with matter.

There are many ways of constructing the teaching film ; for example, it may be made so that the students ask questions on what they have seen, and in this way it may form the basis of the lecture. Here, it should be mentioned, that the modern 16mm. sound projector may be stopped at any desired point and the picture " held " on the screen for further explanation. It is also capable of being rewound without removing the film—points which are of great importance to the teacher.

Another important factor to remember is that any measures to which the producer resorts in order to get over parts of the film to the student, must not be obvious, or the plot has failed. The student must be mentally satisfied without knowing just why or how.



From THE MILLING MACHINE (Steuart Films)

To make teaching films, it is not enough for the producer and director merely to be capable of making good theatre and interest pictures; they must have a good working knowledge of the subject before starting, in order to be able to omit those parts which are not essential, and to include the interesting "frills" which, while not forming the vital subject matter, will give added interest for the student, without jeopardising the purpose of the film.

A producer of scientific teaching films, in particular, must have had a scientific training, as well as the ability to make pictures. To illustrate this point, some time ago I was asked to make a picture on Machine Tools, and seven pages of commentary, containing the subject matter of the film, were handed to me. Having a knowledge of engineering as well as a knowledge of making pictures, I was able to discard a great deal which, from an engineering standpoint, was not essential and, further, to present the essentials in a pictorial form which were not merely interesting but which were also technically correct. In devising the shots for a film dealing with Electricity, a knowledge of the subject again proved invaluable.

In making teaching films, the psychology of the students and their possible reaction to the films must be very carefully studied before starting.

Every foot of a teaching film must be clear, concise and to the point. Every foot of a teaching film must teach.

SOME INSTRUCTIONAL FILMS

WAR DEBTS (French). Production: Atlantic Films. Supervision: Marcel de Hubsch. Direction: Etienne Lallier. Sound: 35 mm. 450 feet. English commentary

Another of those excellent 3-Minute films mentioned by Rotha in SIGHT AND SOUND, vol. 3 No. 10, page 73. This one, by means of diagrams and statistics, describes the course of the War Debts, and Reparations negotiations arising out of the intricate finances of the Allied war effort. Unfortunately it deals only with the French point of view, expressing it forcibly, and also skates rather rapidly over the intricacies of its subject. It should be seen at least twice wherever shown, if only to avoid being misunderstood by those not too well versed in the details. D.F.R.

MILLING MACHINE Production: Steuart Films. Director: Ronald Steuart. Technology: Alex Francis. (School of Engineering and Navigation, Poplar). 35mm. and 16mm. Sound-on-Film.

The methods used in this film constitute extremely interesting examples of educational film technique. Its great virtue is that the commentary has not been merely added to a visual record, so that sometimes it is racing to keep pace with it and omitting essentials, and at other times being superfluous, but the film has been conceived as a whole, image and sound together. The commentator mentions a part of the machine, and its use: after a slight pause, a hand or an arm enters the picture and slowly demonstrates the action of the part. One gets the impression that all the sequences have been most exactly timed, which causes the whole film to move at a measured pace. Another interesting feature is the showing on the screen at the same moment of right and wrong methods of clamping. This actual comparison of the two, together with the commentary, must impress the right method indelibly, since the reasons for the difference are so clearly shown. The only criticism to be made of an otherwise admirable film is that for the great part it shows what the student would probably learn as effectively by handling the machine himself. E.H.L.

INASMUCH (British). Direction: Alec Saville. Photography: Phil Tannura. British Acoustic recording. 35 mm. 22 mins. Distribution: British National.

A very creditable piece of work from the technical point of view. The direction, within the limits described below, and the light and sound are first-class, but it is yet a most unsatisfying film.

Presumably, the message intended is that conveyed by the title, but those responsible for the script have not been able to put it forward with sufficient single-mindedness. It is an incredibly naïve piece of argument to put before an adult audience, and not bold enough in its outline for children to grasp from the film itself.

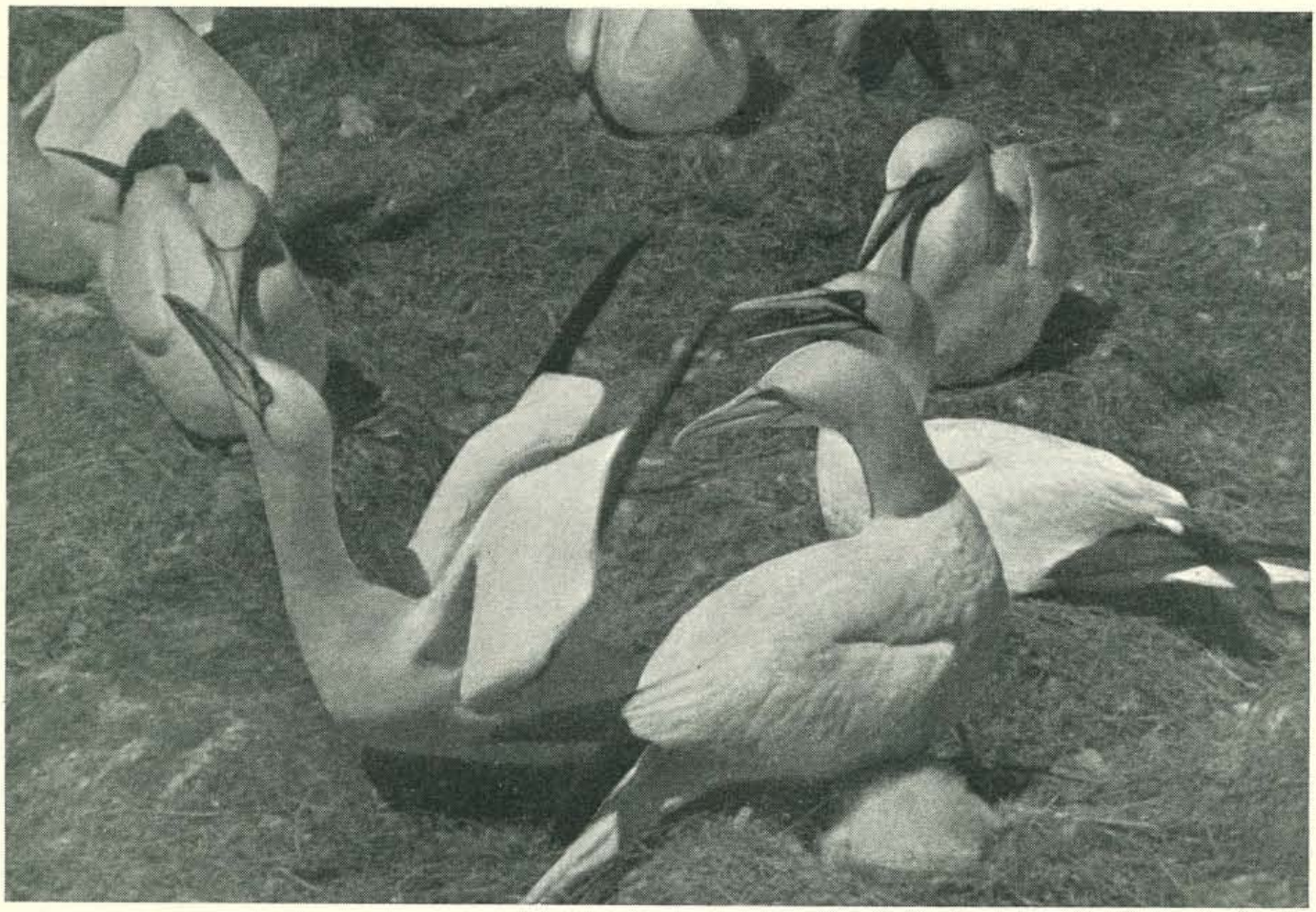
The first thing which upsets the adult is the actual seeing of St. Francis. Donald Wolfit has a nice voice delivery and a good presence, but these attributes are insufficient. Francis of Assisi has, in the popular imagination, become surrounded with a certain spiritual-mystic aura which is quite above and beyond human re-creation, and it would have been quite possible, technically, to make this film without his actual appearance. It has already been done with the invisible introduction of Christ, though momentarily, and no violence is done in that way to preconceived, and often treasured notions. Then there is also the violence done to the story. The director has clearly had to get a tremendous amount of material on the minimum of celluloid, and the skimpiness repays itself ill. Dialogue is gabbled and action hurried, with the inevitable result that both dialogue and actions are too hard. The various characters could have done with playing and re-playing in their parts until they had worn out all harshness and could take their lines and their actions with grace, with ease—with a becoming gentleness. Some of the friars at one period, indeed, are perilously near to the villainous intentions of a Hollywood gangster.

The fundamental trouble is that there seems to have been more than one mind about giving prominence to the historical importance of Francis' work, in which case there should have been more attention given to it; or about giving first place to this particular incident of the beggar-girl, in which case the nature of Francis' beliefs should have been more firmly established for the audience and a little attention given to the girl's part in the story.

The present film is in a different class from its predecessor Mastership. That has a fine and true sincerity, and a deeply real appreciation of present-day needs and conditions which, in comparison, makes the present production look artificial. These films are a brave venture, however, and in encouraging them one would put forward a plea for more clarity, boldness and generosity about any similar productions in the future.

KINO 16mm. FILMS

The 16mm. films distributed by Messrs. Kino (86, Gray's Inn Road) were undamaged by the fire which burnt out the offices in which they were kept, and all bookings of the films will be carried out. The films were fortunately made on safety base stock.



From Professor Huxley's film THE PRIVATE LIFE OF THE GANNETS (London Films)

THE PRIVATE LIFE OF THE GANNETS

Producer and commentator: Professor Julian Huxley. Photography: Osmond Borradaile.
A London Film Production. Distribution: United Artists. Sound on Film. Standard 1379 ft.

The rocky slopes to the north-west of the island of Grassholm, off Pembrokeshire, are the home of a nursery of gannets, and Professor Huxley's film makes a general study of the life and habits of these birds. Beginning from the particular, it indicates the size of the gannet—about that of a goose; the six feet spread of its black tipped wings is mentioned; and details of the structure of beak, head, eye and web-foot are shown in "close-up." Passing to the more general, the film shows the birds bringing grass to make their nests, and there follow some most interesting shots of the ceremonial billing or beak-kissing, a curious expression of excitement which takes place during courtship and continues throughout the brooding season. From nest-building and courtship, the film continues naturally to the appearance of the black, ugly, weak chick extricating itself with difficulty from the shell. An interesting sequence in this section deals with the feeding of the young, and shows the parent birds, which have swallowed food far out at sea, pumping it up from their crops for the chicks. In the last part of the film, slow motion photography is effectively employed to emphasise the grace of the bird in the air, the beauty and strength of its flight and its perfect balance on landing. In the closing sequences the gannets are seen diving for fish, slow motion photography showing how their wings close just before reaching the water.

This bare outline of the film is filled in with some detail. Stages in the growth of the chick are photographed; one series of pictures shows a stray gannet, displaced from her nest, running the gauntlet of neighbouring mothers; there are shots of the seagull on the watch for unprotected nests and for fish vomited from the gannets in fear of this enemy; (an act, incidentally, which facilitates their flight); there are sequences showing a seal colony, and those strange birds, the puffins. Professor Huxley's informative commentary adds certain further particulars which cannot be illustrated by actual photography. He states, for instance, the time taken for hatching, refers to the fact that the gannet lays only one egg each year, but has a life of fifty years, and indicates that guidance is often afforded by the gannets to the fisherman in deciding the position of his nets—the fish are deep when the birds dive vertically, nearer the surface when they dive at a short angle. Interesting though it is, the commentary is perhaps too continuous, affording no break in which to watch without listening and to appreciate the excellent photography for its own sake. The slow motion sequences especially will be enjoyed by all who see the film. It has been made as an interest picture, and not solely for instructional purposes, and it will therefore appeal not only to specialised audiences, but to the majority of the general public as well.

R.R.T.

THE FILM IN ART EDUCATION

By R. Radcliffe Carter

SO far, very little use has been made of the film in art lessons. The prohibitive cost of an adequate projector; the danger of highly inflammable material in untrained hands and the absence of films specially designed for art instruction are the main reasons. Now that serviceable projectors have become relatively cheap and films no longer dangerous to handle, two important obstacles have been removed. It only remains to secure the right subjects and have them properly treated, for projector, screen and film to become part of the ordinary equipment of a School of Art.

A great many of the teaching needs of the School of Art can be met by the lantern and the epidiascope. There is no likelihood of the film superseding the latter instrument, which has the special advantage of being capable of projecting on the screen a picture, in its natural colours, of anything that can be placed on the projecting table inside it. In its unique way it is quite as wonderful an instrument as the film-projector. It can project " still " pictures with much more reality of effect than can be produced by any kind of film negative, because its pictures are made of pure coloured light, without the intervention of glass, celluloid or other film substance.

But, as with the magic lantern, the capacity of the epidiascope for representing movement is severely limited. Here the film brings in a new factor possessing infinite possibilities in class teaching. Certain kinds of movement cannot be conveniently demonstrated, or cannot be demonstrated at all, in the class room—figures of men and women in action—running, jumping, climbing, playing games, and the like. It would be possible in a life class, with an intelligent model, to demonstrate a man reaping with a scythe; to take him repeatedly through the movement of his stroke from beginning to end; to arrest the movement at any part of it for the purpose of recording the resulting attitude in a sketch. It would also be possible for a model to give a demonstration of leaping—a feat in which the body and limbs undergo many rapid changes of position, before, during and after. But in this case, there could be no arrest of movement for the study of these changes. Only the film makes that possible, and the best for the purpose is the slow motion film.

The serious student of life drawing cannot remain satisfied with his studies of the static figure. These acquaint him only with the characteristics of human structure at rest. As soon as he desires to represent a figure in action he has either to imagine it, or, having taken means to witness the appropriate action by someone, somewhere, and to make rapid sketches of it, he may draw it from memory. Now, for the first time, we have at our service the means not only of recording every continuous phase of any action, but also of separating them minutely for deliberate observation. Certain effects which have depended on the observer's ability to memorise a number of instantaneous observations—such as the effect on surface contour of momentary, energetic contraction of muscles—can now be studied at leisure by stopping the film at any required point. The only danger to be avoided in this new means of dissecting motion is that of accepting any arrested phase of motion as necessarily expressive of the whole motion. We know from experience of snap shots that although they may be truthful pictures of action at given moments, they are seldom true as general impressions. On the other hand we first learnt from the snap shot that although the conventional rendering of a leaping horse, with all four legs extended, gave the general impression of the action, it was wholly untrue at any moment of it.

Granted a teacher capable of using the slow motion film intelligently, its possibilities of really practical use are endless. All types of movement can be made available for interesting and profitable class lessons; not only the animated actions of human figures and animals, but also the action of waves, of reflections in smoother water, of trees in wind, indeed of all active creation. A good deal of inanimate material, subjected to movement which an artist may have occasion to represent, can be similarly studied. Such things as boats under sail, rarely seen by the majority of this isle's inhabitants, can be made as realistic as at sea and infinitely easier for the study of motion. One of the ancient problems of the studio was the representation of " flying drapery." As modern art seldom calls for pictures of classic deities floating between earth and heaven, with yards of their apparel streaming after them, the problem causes little anxiety to-day. But if it should arise, the film would be a better process of study than the old fashioned practice of arranging " flying drapery " on the floor.

Some of the films produced for popular entertainment, showing the growth of flowers from bud to blossom (the exact converse of slow motion practice), would make admirable demonstrations for students of floral design. Such students would profit equally from film demonstrations of the mechanical processes by which designs are reproduced in material for the market. It is not possible to bring manufacturing operations into a school, nor always convenient to take students into a factory. Again the film is the most practicable alternative. All the processes, for example, of power loom weaving, wall-paper and fabric printing, poster lithography, metal spinning and stamping, glass blowing, and a large number of other trade operations could be illustrated. It would be the easiest way of supplying the insistent demand that students of industrial design should

have an acquaintance with industrial processes. The more one thinks of the possibilities, the greater seems their extent. The film could bring visibly and vividly into the art school all necessary technical information which many students have now to acquire, very imperfectly, from books, magazines, class descriptions or hearsay.

Three considerations seem pertinent at this stage. Could the necessary films be produced by the commercial film companies at a profit? If so, would the studios submit their direction and production to an experienced teacher? Or would it be better, now that film cameras and projectors have become cheap enough to be popular toys, for the teacher to make his own films? The answers to these questions depend upon data by no means definite. But, on the whole, the production of the film by the teacher seems the best general line of policy to follow. It is conceivable that some enterprising teacher will some day take the question of supply into his own hands and prepare films for his colleagues, as teachers now prepare text books. This in time will lead to a firm of educational film publishers and the regular formation of film libraries in Schools of Art, and circulating film libraries of the type now handling lantern slides. The time is ripe for someone to begin.

Welcome to "SIGHT & SOUND" SCHOOL SECTION

The following are among the messages which have been received welcoming the new policy of " SIGHT AND SOUND *" devoting a special section to school cinematography.*

THE NATIONAL UNION OF TEACHERS

The teaching profession is rapidly becoming convinced of the value of the new medium in education provided by the instructional film. In spite of existing restrictions school cinematography has developed rapidly in the last three years. Where Local Education Authorities have been unable to find the necessary equipment, teachers in many cases have provided at their own expense or from school funds projectors, screens and often apparatus for film production. Their greatest difficulty, however, has been the lack of authoritative information on the whole subject. It is for this reason that I cordially welcome the decision of the Film Institute to devote a section of SIGHT AND SOUND to school cinematography, and I hope that teachers may come to regard it as the proper source to which they should turn for guidance, information and advice.

F. MANDER
General Secretary

THE NATIONAL UNION OF WOMEN TEACHERS

The National Union of Women Teachers has for a number of years taken a special interest in the educational possibilities of the film, and welcomed the inauguration of the British Film Institute, with its promise of help and encouragement for the new art of School Cinematography.

It is therefore with considerable pleasure that we note the setting apart of a special section in SIGHT AND SOUND to deal with this important subject. It should prove of great use to educationists who already use the film, and we hope it will stimulate still further interest and experiment.

ETHEL E. FROUD
General Secretary

THE ASSOCIATION OF ASSISTANT MASTERS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

My Association welcomes the inclusion in SIGHT AND SOUND of a section dealing with developments in school cinematography. Provided that experienced representative teachers are consulted, and through them contact with the schools is maintained, nothing but good can come of the publication of authoritative information. The Editorial Board has a splendid opportunity of doing really first-class service; Secondary Schoolmasters hope it will have the wisdom to enlist the help of those best qualified to assist.

A. S. TREVES
Chairman

THE SCIENCE MASTERS ASSOCIATION

There must be few science teachers who have not at some time or another been struck by the enormous advantages a film could have over static lantern slides and laborious blackboard drawings in supplementing verbal instruction and laboratory demonstrations. Up till now, however, there has been no organisation to which the schoolmaster could turn for impartial information as to what films were available, what apparatus was likely to suit him best, and what difficulties were likely to come his way.

The S.M.A. welcomes the decision to devote a special section of SIGHT AND SOUND to this branch of cinema, and feels sure that it will do much to encourage a more widespread appreciation of the value of the film in education.

A. E. FOOT
Hon. Secretary

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF HEAD TEACHERS

It is an undoubted fact that the film is a very important factor in the normal life of the average child of to-day and we would wish to see its tremendous educational potentialities made full use of in the schools wherever possible. Mechanical aids to education can never be a substitute for the personality of the teacher but they can be wonderful stimuli to the imagination and deepening intelligence of the children. This Association has already, in Conference, passed resolutions welcoming the developments in school cinematography, and we note with pleasure your decision to devote a special section to information concerning it.

GORDON T. BARRY
Hon. General Secretary

THE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTE OF SCOTLAND

The Council of the Educational Institute of Scotland welcomes the incorporation in SIGHT AND SOUND of a section devoted to the cinematograph in school. An authoritative collation of recorded progress, and a central point for the airing and sifting of new projects, are admirably designed to give the desired impetus to the use of the film in schools.

THOMAS HENDERSON
General Secretary

GERMANY LAUNCHES NEW INSTITUTE FOR INSTRUCTIONAL FILMS

The following is a translation of an article entitled "Die Neue Reichstelle für den Unterrichtsfilm." which was published in the "Deutsche Filmzeitung." of November 25th, 1934.

WITHIN the space of barely eight weeks, Kapitänleutnant v. Werner and his collaborators, Drs. Dautert, Gauger and Guenther (heads of departments) have established and equipped the National Institute for Instructional Films. It must have cost incalculable labour and foresight, to create out of nothing, beginning with a mere table and chair, the framework of a supply depot for films and apparatus to serve 60,000 German schools. What the representatives of the Press were shown at a reception last Tuesday justifies the hope that by January, at the latest, the supply of apparatus to the schools will be actually in operation.

Up to the present, the Institute has not decided in favour of any special type of projector. At the present moment the small film projectors already produced by the industry for the market are being tested for their suitability for school use by the Technische Hochschule of Berlin. The projector which will be recommended to the 23 German provincial film centres, after demonstrations of all those capable of use, will have to be easy to handle, so strongly illuminated that the often inadequate provision for darkening school-rooms does not endanger the success of exhibitions; it must be economical in use and of durable material. Once the type of apparatus is chosen, an order for 10,000 projectors will be given.

In order to be able to make an immediate beginning in the New Year with the supply of instructional films, films in use for popular education are, with the help of teachers, being adapted as school films; these adaptations represent only an emergency measure, until the National Institute can order its own films. As was pointed out in our last number by the ex-director of what used to be the Bavarian Centre for Lantern Slides (who did such good work in that capacity) the chief difference between a film for use in schools and one for adult popular education lies in the provision of captions, in the gaps left for the teacher's lecture, in its brevity and in the way it fits into the curriculum, etc. In the demonstration hall of the National Institute there was shown, as an example of an instructional film, a biological film of the life of a pea, broken up into many short sections, and another of peasant potteries, as well as a beautiful fairy-story film by Diehl.

The distribution of orders for instructional films to firms, which will have to carry them out at their own expense, but on lines laid down by the National Institute (which will also intervene at the final stages in the matter of captions and cutting) is already being prepared for by Studienassessor Fladrich, by means of a *plan of requirements*, worked out to the smallest detail. In this, all subjects are closely sub-divided, the single sub-divisions being provided with indications of their possible use for other branches. The analysis of subjects was already on exhibition, in respect of organic and inorganic chemistry, in the form of a large, chromatic diagram, with another for physical exercise. These analyses of subjects are necessary for the purposes of adapting the orders for films of the National Institute to the needs of the very different kinds of schools providing general education.

Colleges and vocational schools are, for the time being, excluded from consideration. But the fact that the colleges will have to be included before long is illustrated, for example, by the provisions of the decree concerning animal protection. The filming of experiments on animals will make it possible to reduce the sacrifice of animals for medical teaching purposes to a single occasion, and to let the moving picture replace repeated killing or maiming.

The projectors and films are, as has been made known, to be placed at the disposal of schools free of charge. They will be purchased out of a fund raised by means of the newly introduced *contribution for lesson material* levied on 12 million German school-children, to the amount of 20 pfennigs per quarter. The sum received will be deposited at interest in a Bank. Running expenses will be paid for out of the interest on such capital as can at a given time be left on deposit. But the capital as a whole is to be devoted to the benefit of the schools for the purchase of projectors and films. This charge for lesson material (i.e., material for learning, not for teaching—"Lern" not "Lehr-Material," the latter being naturally supplied free of charge) is to be waived in the case of the children of the unemployed, those belonging to very large families, etc. . . .

The Institute publishes a circular to teaching staffs. The first number, published on the 1st of November, contains 16 pages of text, half of which consists of lists of approved or condemned series of lantern slides. The circular covers its expenses by advertisements. In the near future the circular is to be replaced by a journal, which is to deal with all questions of material, method and technique in regard to films and lantern slides, including their use for parents' evenings. It will also contain critical reports on the development of cinematography in general, on sport and cultural films, and on their significance in relation to juveniles and to popular education.

BOOKS TO READ

MAN OF ARAN, by Pat Mullen, Faber & Faber, 8s. 6d.

Pat Mullen acted as contact man between Flaherty and the Aran islanders during the former's stay on the islands, and is therefore particularly well equipped for writing a book of this kind. The first three chapters give glimpses of Pat Mullen's life from his earliest recollections to the coming of Flaherty. Thereafter the book tells of the adventures during the making of the film itself. The first part is the more interesting : the reader feels the coming of the film-makers as an intrusion from the too-familiar outside world between him and the everyday Aran which he was finding so engrossing. But even the second part is not always solely concerned with the film, and throws much light on the life and character of the islanders themselves. *Man of Aran* is clearly stamped by the individuality of the writer, with its spirit of stubborn independence, whether he is describing how he threw up a job in America, though penniless, because the foreman swore at him, or whether he is describing his impressions of Flaherty himself. This spirit gives the book an almost epic quality in places : the first chapter ends with the simple sentence : "At sixteen I was pretty strong for my age."

The story is frequently leavened by a characteristic Irish humour : as when Flaherty chooses old Patch Ruadh for the film, much to the latter's amazement, who cannot understand why he should be preferred before other men ; Pat Mullen says he has something about him that is dramatic, and continues, " ' If I was to give you my honest opinion I'd say 'tis in your whiskers you have it ! ' ' Well, then, a thousand thanks to God that I have it in my whiskers or some place else. But anyhow, I may as well look after them now you say that ' tis in them that it is,' said Patch."

The accounts of shark-hunting prove as exciting here as they were on the film. Many a time the little curragh and its crew risked certain destruction in order to give Flaherty the material for his storm scenes, and the writer is at his best in describing how they grimly battle their way back to safety. This is a ' book of the film ' in a new sense, in that it is complementary to the film and not just a literary version of the film-story. As a result it is an illuminating commentary both on the limits of filmic expression, and on the relation between the cinema and literature. The film gave an impression, a feeling of life on Aran with a vividness which could be conveyed in no other way : it gave its emotional content. The book, however, fills in the background with a richness of detail which would be impossible to the film, and which enables one to judge the film in its correct proportions.

E.H.L.

Patch Ruadh and Pat Mullen (*Man of Aran*)

THE CENSOR, THE DRAMA AND THE FILM, 1900-1934, by Dorothy Knowles, Allen & Unwin, 7s. 6d.

Film Censorship in this country is, Miss Knowles asserts, " a network of regulations concerned with fire, licensing, music, quota and even Sunday performances, all ingeniously turned to control, but by virtue of no actual *law* of censorship, the contents of the films exhibited." Miss Knowles sets out to determine why and how censorship of films came into existence, how it works and who really is the censor, but although she has collected most of the material necessary for the task she has complicated the intricacies of the subject by untidy arrangement of her facts, a slipshod method of writing and one inaccuracy of fact which is unfortunate. On p. 195 Miss Knowles asserts that " about a year ago the Kinematograph Renters' Society required its members to enter individually into agreement with the Board (of Film Censors) to rent out only those films which had been granted a certificate." Actually the individual renters undertake not to attempt to obtain from local authorities permission to show films which have been refused a certificate by the Board. The difference is important since it leaves renters the opportunity of taking direct to local authorities films which they believe the Board will refuse to pass, and this course has been taken by individual renters. If this method became widespread it would tend again to weaken the position of the Board, to revive the chaos of local censorships, and to invite agitation for an official governmental censorship. This was the situation in 1931 when the Home Office Consultative Committee was appointed to effect co-operation between local authorities and the Board.

The advantages of the present system of censorship, the disadvantages of it and of the alternative systems, how far non-inflammable films are at present exempt from censorship, and what difficulties beset private Film Societies, are all discussed by Miss Knowles. By reference to and examination of the contents of films which have been cut and banned, Miss Knowles proceeds to examine how censorship has worked and to deduce what are the considerations which influence the Board and the local authorities. Where motive and influences can in many cases only be deduced by reference to the vague generalisations which are from time to time issued by the British Board of Film Censors, it is obvious that there is room for controversy and disagreement. One thing is quite clear, namely, the extreme difficulty of working any system of censorship and the impossibility of satisfying everyone.

Miss Knowles' reference to the British Film Institute is in this respect particularly apposite : " In the field of the cinema as entertainment the Institute would encourage a more discriminating and enterprising taste, by aiding and advising the film societies in their work, and by helping to secure a supply of good films, British or foreign, for the ever-growing public which demands a higher standard than that generally displayed in the normal commercial cinema. By helping to create a great demand for good films, and so checking the present stream of third-rate films, the Institute would also be giving a considerable impetus towards their production, since market value must necessarily be, if not the chief, at least one of the chief factors in production. In thus indirectly encouraging the production of good films the Institute would be helping to diminish the need for censorship, in reality but an admission of our failure to deserve intellectual freedom ; it would, moreover, be doing a work which no censorship could do, although that is generally expected of it, namely, contribute to the exclusion of that which is merely vulgar, risky, or dubious."

W.F.

WHAT THE BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE IS DOING

WORK OF THE QUARTER

Panels and Committees

The Medical Panel has now completed its preliminary catalogue which will shortly be generally available. The films are noted as being suitable for students, postgraduates, nurses or public propaganda, and are divided under 9 sections and 41 sub-heads. Particulars of the source, type, length of each film are also given. The catalogue will be particularly valuable in that many of the films have been made by lecturers and surgeons mainly for their own personal use, and it has not been generally known either that they existed or were available for loan by others engaged in medical work.

The Science Committee of the Education Panel is drafting scenarios on the Nitrogen Cycle in which both the biological and the chemical aspects are being dealt with. The Geography Committee is considering methods of augmenting the production of good geographical films which are likely to be in great demand by education authorities. In the meantime the History and Arts Committee is considering the possibility of a film which would make the public realise the great interest which could and should be taken in art by everyone. The film would be designed to develop this interest as well as critical faculties. The Committee has also made arrangements to compile a Report of not more than 20,000 words on historical teaching films, which will summarise the conclusions of previous reports on the subject, survey the objects of historical films in relation to history teaching, and discuss practical difficulties before making recommendations.

The value of such a report to producers as well as teachers is generally agreed, and at a meeting between Chairmen of panels and committees, it was felt that it would be an advantage for each of the subject committees to issue a similar report. The meeting referred to was arranged to achieve a greater degree of collaboration between the various panels. It was most successful ; and it is proposed to make the meeting a regular feature of the Institute's work.

The Scientific Research Panel is working to obtain information on the extent to which the cinematograph has been used by scientific research workers. The Panel is compiling a list of the films dealing with scientific observations and experiments which have been made by individuals primarily for their own use and not put into circulation through the ordinary commercial channels. Approaches are being made to various scientific bodies, and it is hoped that related institutions will also assist in the enquiry. Replies are still coming in, and it is the intention of the Panel, when this information has been collected, to compile a memorandum setting out the progress made so far with the film in scientific research, drawing attention to the ways in which it might be used. The Panel is also making detailed enquiries as to the extent to which automatic cinematograph projectors are used in museums and similar institutions, both at home and abroad.

The Committee set up under the Institute to advise on the making of a series of films to interpret the new Board of Education syllabus of physical education has been meeting regularly. One film has already been made at an East End School in London, with the approval of the L.C.C. Another film is in the course of production at Selly Park School, Birmingham. A further film to be " shot " in Birmingham will show a class of boys, ten years of age, playing at games on the Metchley Lane Fields, Harborne. There are also to be two pictures of infant classes at physical exercises.

Information Service

To the many people who find themselves confronted with particular problems demanding individual attention or requiring information of a kind not easily accessible, the Institute's information service is proving most valuable. To provide a list of films on geology, to advise on the customs duties payable on a sub-standard film negative sent from Palestine to be developed in Britain and then returned, to receive in the afternoon a request for a film programme for the same evening and supply it, to advise on projectors for use in schools, to locate the holders of the 35 mm. and 16 mm. copyright of a film of which only the name is given, to advise on the conditions under which children may be employed in films—these are a few recent examples of the kind of query which the information service is daily called upon to answer.

One of the most interesting features of recent development is the increasing extent to which the film trade is also using this service.

Attached to the information department is a library of books, and this is steadily growing. One of the most recent acquisitions is a collection of designs of English historical costumes and furniture, very generously given to the Institute by Mr. Neville Kearney of the Film Group of the Federation of British Industries.

Publications

In the last issue of SIGHT AND SOUND a review appeared of the Institute's Leaflet No. 5 on *Non-Theatrical Apparatus and Films*. It has been widely circulated, and the practical advice which it gives concerning apparatus and its useful appendices of addresses of firms, cost of machines, etc., have been fully appreciated. The *Scottish Educational Journal* referred to it as " *a multum in parvo* of authoritative information, of the highest value to all users and

prospective users of the cinema in the schools." There has been an enormous demand for additional copies, and the result has been that the first issue of the leaflet is now exhausted. Requests for copies, however, are still being received and a revised edition is therefore being prepared.

The *Monthly Film Bulletin* of the British Film Institute is now nearing the end of its first year of publication. Since its inception, the educational section has proved a useful guide for teachers in providing independent criticism of educational films; the first year, however, has been largely experimental. It was recently suggested that the time had come when the methods adopted in criticising films for the Bulletin might profitably be reviewed in the light of the experience so far gained. A small committee was called together by Mr. Cameron who acted as chairman, and a full report of its recommendations has been prepared for submission to the Governors. This report includes suggestions for a complete list of data necessary to describe an educational film, a comprehensive reviewing form, and a revised format for the Bulletin. One of the most interesting sections is that on subject classification, recommending the adoption of the Brussels system of subject classification for films, both in the Institute's files and in the Bulletin and final catalogue.

Membership

The membership of the Institute is steadily increasing. Amongst recent additions to the list of members are :

Education Committee, Lanarkshire ; West Riding of Yorkshire Education Committee ; Edinburgh Education Committee ; Educational Institute of Scotland ; Government of Jamaica ; National Union of Teachers ; Staffordshire Education Committee ; Trade Union Congress ; Tottenham Education Committee ; Wolverhampton Education Committee ; Middlesex Education Committee ; Government of Cyprus ; Darlington Education Committee ; Tanganyika Territory Education Committee ; Cambridge Education Committee ; Lincoln Education Committee ; Somerset Education Committee ; Director of Education, Jerusalem ; Director of Education, The Straits Settlements ; Director of Education, Trinidad ; Director of Education, Hong Kong ; Swindon Education Committee ; Leeds Education Committee ; Director of Education, Gold Coast ; Walthamstow Education Committee ; Barking Education Committee ; Acton Education Committee ; The Director of Education, Chief Secretary and Provincial Commissioner, Government of Uganda ; Superintendent of Education, Kedah, F.M.S. ; Director of Education, Bermuda ; Chairman, Central Censorship Board, Jerusalem ; Chief of Police, Grenada, B.W.I. ; Chief of Police, St. Vincent, B.W.I. ; Inspector General of Police, Singapore ; Chief Inspector of Schools, Leeds ; Surgeon-General, Port of Spain, B.W.I. ; General Secretary, National Council of Labour Colleges ; Chairman, Zanzibar Cinematograph Exhibition Licensing Board ; Messrs. Cadbury Bros.

B.F.I. SUMMER SCHOOL

THE Governors of the British Film Institute have decided to hold a Film Summer School at Scarborough from Monday, August 5th to Saturday, August 10th. It is being organised in conjunction with the Educational Handwork Association. Mr. J. W. Brown, General Manager of the Institute, will be Principal, and Mr. J. Kay, Assistant Inspector of Handicraft, L.C.C., will be Vice-Principal. The general scheme of the course is outlined, and promises to lecture have already been received from well known experts. On the technical side Mr. Waley, whose knowledge of technical matters is well known to readers of SIGHT AND SOUND, will deal with the manipulation of projectors, the question of illumination, the handling and mending of films and other technical matters. Practical work will form a considerable part of this section of the course. Discussion on the Production of an Educational Film is included in the curriculum, and it is intended that a good proportion of time shall be given to the actual making of films. The use of the film in the classroom will be discussed, and demonstration lessons with the aid of suitable films will be given to classes of children. The specific lecture subjects of these demonstrations remain to be determined, but it is probable that they will include History, Literature, Elementary Science, Nature Study and Geography. This section of the School's activities will be in the capable hands of Mr. J. A. Lauwerys, B.Sc., A.I.C., of the Institute of Education, University of London, and Mr. W. H. George of the " William Rhodes " Modern School, Chesterfield, who has used and made films for educational purposes. The subject of Mass Demonstrations and the Use of Background films will be dealt with by Mr. G. D. Griffith, M.B.E., B.Sc., who will also organise a mass demonstration and arrange for the testing of results.

The above lectures on Technique, Production and Classroom Films will take place in the mornings, forming Course A which will be restricted to students definitely enrolled for this course. The following lectures are included amongst those scheduled for Film Course B :—

1. General Film Production.
2. The Production of an Educational Film.
3. The Film in Education.
4. The Film in National Life.

In association with the School a general exhibition of apparatus and films is likely to be arranged which will add to the interest of the proceedings.

Fuller details will be available for the next issue of SIGHT AND SOUND, by which time it is hoped to announce the names of all lecturers and particulars of the inaugural address. In the meantime all enquiries should be addressed to Mr. J. Kay, 74, Limesdale Gardens, Edgware, Middlesex.

The British Film Institute has been informed that the Privy Council has decided to make a grant of £6,000 to the Institute from the Cinematograph Fund in respect of the year 1935.

NEWS FROM BRANCHES AND SOCIETIES

BRIGHTON, HOVE AND DISTRICT F.I. BRANCH, Hon. Sec: Mrs. E. J. Hutchins, Cowichan, Withdean Crescent, Brighton.

The Brighton, Hove and District Branch of the British Film Institute held a meeting in October at which Mr. Eric Hakim spoke on "The Repertory Movement in the Cinema Theatre." During his address he referred to the fact that experiments were being made in certain of the Cinema theatres in Brighton in the showing of "unusual" films in their weekly programmes and congratulated those responsible. An interesting discussion followed his address and as a result of the meeting more members joined the Branch. On December 6th by kind permission of the Gaumont-British Picture Corporation Ltd., a party visited the studios at Shepherd's Bush.

CHICHESTER FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY, Sec: G. A. Wilkins, 57, Orchard Avenue, Chichester, Sussex.

A meeting will be held early in the New Year to enrol the additional members necessary before the Governors can formally approve the formation of the branch. Among the members already enrolled is Dr. G. K. Bell, Bishop of Chichester.

HUDDERSFIELD FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY, Hon. Sec: S. W. Bonarjee, 72, New North Road, Huddersfield.

The inaugural meeting of the Huddersfield branch will be held early this year.

LEEDS FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY, Acting Sec: S. A. Crawford, 3, Hares Mount, Shepherd's Lane, Leeds, 8.

In September last, Mr. A. C. Cameron was the principal speaker at a meeting in the Philosophical Hall, Leeds, when a local branch of the British Film Institute was formed. Sir James Baillie, Vice-Chancellor of Leeds University, presided and Mr. Metcalfe, Chairman of the Leeds Branch of the C.E.A. and Mr. F. Heming Vaughan of Merseyside Film Institute Society were also present. Mr. Cameron outlined the objects and history of the Institute, and in referring to the educational use of films said that the Institute was endeavouring to link up the teaching and trade sides so that needs and difficulties could be properly discussed. Stressing the necessity of provincial branches of the Institute, he said it was most important that such an organisation in London should have roots in the provinces to nourish it. Sir James Baillie proposed the resolution which resulted in the formation of the branch, and was seconded by Dr. Terry Thomas, Head Master of Leeds Grammar School.

LONDON FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY, Hon. Sec.: c/o British Film Institute, 4, Gt. Russell Street, W.C.1.
(*See page* 148)

MANCHESTER FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY, Sec: J. N. Bamforth, 14, Lorne Grove, Fallowfield, Manchester, 14.

A meeting was held at the Manchester Central Library on November 30th at which a resolution was passed to establish a branch in Manchester. Officers and an interim committee were elected among whom are representatives of the Manchester Film Society, Manchester and Salford Workers' Film Society, Metro-Vicker Film Society and National Council of Women.

MERSEYSIDE FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY, Hon. Sec: 5 & 6, Bluecoat Chambers, School Lane, Liverpool, 1.

The Society is now engaged in a very full Second Season. Supported by a large membership, its activities cover every aspect of the Film. Using the Society's office as a focal point, the Committee has adopted a plan whereby Regional Secretaries may connect with all the districts of Merseyside. In addition, through its members, the Society has been able to make contact with some of the principal factories and stores in Liverpool. In no case has any opportunity been missed that will further the main object of the Society—"to raise the general standard of Film Exhibition."

When an Office and Rooms were taken, it was intended that these should become a centre of film activity. Every effort has been made to ensure this, and books on the Film and current periodicals are available for members' use. An Exhibition of Amateur Films made by various Societies and by members has been given, as well as shows on small-size stock of notable silent films. These have included: Grass, Paris Qui Dort, Warning Shadows, Waxworks, and Storm Over Asia. Moreover, it has been a privilege to welcome to the Rooms John Grierson, Paul Rotha and Peter Le Neve Foster who have given stimulating talks on the Film.

So far, the outstanding event of the Season has been the International Film Show given by the Society to a full attendance of members at the Prince of Wales Cinema. From Great Britain came Pett and Pott; from France Un Monastère, New Europe and Tour de Chant; from Russia, Pacific 231, and from Germany, Harlequin. A Club Night was subsequently arranged at the Prince of Wales Cinema for the showing of Ces Messieurs de la Santé.

The Society's Monthly Bulletin is now printed and proves of considerable service to members in the information given regarding films to be shown in Merseyside cinemas.

NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE F.I. SOCIETY, Acting Sec.: E. J. Wheldon, Glenarm, Nr. Stone, Staffs.

At a meeting held at Hanley Town Hall on November 16th it was decided to form a North Staffordshire branch of the Institute. The meeting which consisted of members of the North Staffordshire English, Geographical and Historical Associations was presided over by Mr. J. F. Carr, Director of Education for the City of Stoke-on-Trent. A Lecture was given on the educational use of films by Mr. E. J. Wheldon who moved the resolution for the formation of a branch. The resolution was seconded by Colonel Josiah Wedgewood M.P. for Newcastle-under-Lyme.

NORTHERN IRELAND F.I. BRANCH, Hon. Sec: Sydney P. Whitehouse, 86, Balmoral Avenue, Belfast.

During the last few months the Committee has been working hard with a view to putting the branch on a sound and workable basis. The membership list continues to grow—nearly a hundred members have been enrolled—and there is a valuable increased public interest in the Branch's activities. With regard to the latter thanks are due to the local press which has given a fair amount of publicity to the work.

On Tuesday, 4th December, Mr. Frank A. Hoare gave an interesting illustrated lecture on Film Technique. Lord Justice Andrews who presided mentioned the need for a better type of film and in this connection welcomed the establishment of the Institute and the branch and recognised its work in endeavouring to raise public appreciation of films. He emphasised that while the work of the censor was purely negative, the Film Institute's work was constructive and positive.

The first Bulletin was issued towards the end of November. It contains a foreword dealing with the ideals of the Institute, Branch News giving some details of local activities, and the main features of the December programmes of five local cinemas, together with brief reviews of some of the films.

NORTHAMPTON FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY, Hon. Sec: C. H. Smith, 131, Wellingborough Road, Northampton.

At a meeting held at the Exchange Cinema on September 28th a resolution was passed that a branch of the Institute should be formed, and an interim committee was appointed. Although the branch is not yet formally constituted the committee is already at work demonstrating to prospective members what a branch could do. At the committee's request Wings Over Everest was included in the programme at the Exchange Cinema during the week November 12th. The Committee has also been arranging exhibitions of sub-standard films and has started the formation of a library of books on the cinema.

SALFORD FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY, Organising Sec: Dr. J. Bradley, 8, Acton Square, Salford, Manchester.

A resolution was passed to establish a branch of the Institute at Salford on October 28th and the branch was

formally authorised by the Governors on November 1st. The Society arranged a demonstration of educational films on January 18th and 19th at the Salford Royal Technical College.

DEVELOPMENTS IN SCOTLAND

The Scottish Film Council of the British Film Institute is making considerable progress in the establishment of Panels, and an arrangement has been made by which the Chairman of each Scottish Panel will be a member of the corresponding Panel of the Institute. The Panels which have already been set up include: The Entertainments Panel (Chairman, Mr. H. Forsyth Hardy), the Education Panel (Chairman, Mr. T. A. Blake), and the Social Service Panel (Chairman, Miss M. G. Cowan). Other Panels in process of formation include the Amateur Cinematography Panel (Chairman, Mr. Stanley L. Russell) and the Industry and Commerce Panel (Chairman, Mr. G. E. R. Young). Dr. James Low and Mr. C. A. Oakley are continuing to act as Interim Chairman and Hon. Secretary respectively.

A very successful amateur festival was organised in the Lyric Theatre, Glasgow, on Saturday, 8th December, by the Meteor Society. Lord Inverclyde was Chairman with Mr. Andrew Buchanan as adjudicator. Entries were received from all parts of Great Britain. The classes covered story-films, documentary films, sound-films, and films produced by individuals. The Glasgow School of Art Kine Club was awarded the Saville Cup for the outstanding production shown at the festival. The theme of a day in the School of Art from the arrival of the cleaners to the janitor switching off the lights was not particularly original, but the treatment was often brilliant. The audience of approximately 600 persons was unanimous in its agreement with Mr. Buchanan's decision. A remarkable colour film made by Mr. Ian S. Ross was also shown at the meeting.

The Federation of Scottish Film Societies has been constituted by the Film Society of Glasgow, the Edinburgh Film Guild, and the recently established Aberdeen Film Society. Much headway has been made in the uniting of educational interests to form the Scottish Education Film Association.

BILLINGHAM FILM SOCIETY, Norton-on-Tees, Durham. Hon. Secretaries: H. S. Coles, 3, Cambridge Terrace, Norton-on-Tees; Mrs. E. H. Sale, 22, Rdwing Lane, Norton-on-Tees.

The Society has now reached its fifth Season and amongst the pictures chosen for presentation were Mail, a Russian cartoon film showing the adventures of a caterpillar sent through the post, with satirical glimpses of the countries it encounters, and René Clair's Sous Les Toits de Paris. There is no formal membership of the Society. Anyone may come to any performance by buying a ticket. The attendance at the performance on November 21st was 862.

BIRMINGHAM FILM SOCIETY, Hon. Sec: 21, Carpenter Road, Birmingham, 15.

The above society began its fifth season in October with a membership greatly exceeding that of last season and now, at a figure of well over 700, threatening to outstrip the capacity of the Scala Theatre, at which for the last two years all the meetings of the society have been held. Two performances have so far been given; the programmes were as follows:—October 21st: Don Quixote (Pabst), Canal Barge (van Nevenhoff and Franken), Industrial Britain (Flaherty and Grierson), Father Noah's Ark (Disney). November 11th: Rapt (Kirsanoff), Pirates of the Rhone (Aurenche), Mail (Kanovski). Further meetings will be held on the second Sunday of each month up to and including April.

FILM SOCIETY OF GLASGOW: Hon. Secretary: D. Paterson Walker, 127, Vincent Street, Glasgow, C.2.

The first meeting of the season was held in Cranston's Picture House, Glasgow, on 14th October last when the principal film shown was La Maternelle. Other meetings were held on 4th and 25th November. The principal films were Liebes Kommando and L'Ordonnance. Two lectures have already been given in the Gainsborough Halls, one by Mr. C. A. Oakley on "An Appreciation of the German Cinema" and the other by Mr. Clifford Strain on "Amateur Production." The Society has now over 740 members and has been compelled to close the membership and institute a waiting list.

THE SANCTUARY (*See p.* 188) (Montagu Pictures)

Reproduced by courtesy of the "Newcastle Chronicle"

FILM SOCIETY, LONDON, Secretary: Miss J. M. Harvey, 56, Manchester Street, London, W.1.

The following films have been shown by the Film Society at its performances on October 28th, November 25th and December 16th:—*Great Britain*: Weather Forecast (G.P.O.), The Cathode Ray Oscillograph (G. B. Instructional), Beyond This Open Road (Film Art Group), The Song of Ceylon (G.P.O.). *France*: Night on the Bare Mountain (from engravings by Miss Parker and Mr. Alexeiff), Zero de Conduite (Jean Vigo), A Trip to Davy Jones' Locker, (Pathecolor 1910), All Quiet in the East (animated models and cartoons by P. Bianchi), Three Minute Films (Three Atlantic Diagrammatic Films, Zenifilms), The Idea (film woodcuts by Bartosch). *Germany*: Deutschland Zwischen Gestern und Heute (Wilfried Basse; best documentary, Venice Exhibition, 1934), Das Rollende Rad (Lotte Reinige), Gasparcolor (three shorts in colour, two by Fischinger). *U.S.S.R.*: The Oil Symphony (Pumpiansky).

HAMPSTEAD FILM SOCIETY, Secretary: J. S. Fairfax-Jones, Everyman Cinema Theatre, Hampstead, N.W.3.

The first performance of the newly established Film Society at Hampstead took place on Sunday, 23rd December when Pett and Pott (G.P.O.) and a Czecho-Slovakian film, Pred Maturitou (Before Matriculation) were amongst those presented. The Everyman Cinema is the headquarters of the Society.

INDEPENDENT FILM MAKERS ASSOCIATION, Hon. Sec: T. Baird, 32, Shaftesbury Avenue, London, W.1.

The Independent Film-Makers Association and *Cinema Quarterly* are together compiling a classified catalogue of sub-standard films that have been produced by amateur and professional film-makers. Meetings of the Association have been taking place each week in members' flats. Several films have been projected including Le Neve Foster's film on the Summer School, and discussions have taken place on scripts submitted. The Association continues to maintain contact with societies, etc., overseas.

LEICESTER FILM SOCIETY, Hon. Secretary: E. Irving Richards, Vaughan College, Leicester.

At the opening performance of the season, Rotha's **Contact** was shown, together with the German submarine film **Morgenrot**. The main feature for the November performance was **Charlemagne**, and for December, **Thunder over Mexico**, directed by Eisenstein.

Miss Mary Field gave the first two lectures of the season on Saturday, December 18th, when she spoke on "The Limitations of the Educational Film" and on "The New Spirit in Educational Films." Both lectures were illustrated. Arrangements have been made for further talks to be given during the season.

MANCHESTER AND SALFORD WORKERS' FILM SOCIETY, Hon. Sec: T. Cavenagh, 69, Liverpool Street, Salford, 5, Lancs.

The Society has reached its fourth season, and among the films presented have been **The Ghost that Never Returns**, a Russian film made by Alex. Room dealing with the class-struggle in South America, and **New Europe**, a clever little film awarded the Medaille d'Or at the 19th Biennial Congress at Venice as the best short of the year. **Pacific 231** has also been shown, a Russian film which is a visual accompaniment to Honneger's music representing the progress of a trans-continental locomotive; two shorts dealing with experiments in hand-drawn sound by Fischinger and Professor Moholy Nagy have proved of particular interest.

MONTAGU AMATEUR PICTURES, 8, Montagu Avenue, Gosforth, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

The principal activity during the quarter has been the arrangement of a Public Exhibition at the end of November when a display was given of films made by Montagu Pictures. These included **The Language of Flowers**, which was awarded a certificate of merit by the Royal Photographic Society, 1934, and **Sanctuary**, a feature film telling a story of the North-Country in the 15th century. The proceeds of the three performances were given to the Poor Children's Holidays Association and the "Chronicle" Sunshine Fund.

NORTH LONDON FILM SOCIETY, Sec: H. A. Green, 6, Carysfort Road, Stoke Newington, N.16.

The North London Film Society, which meets once a month, was formed early in 1934 to exhibit films privately on standard-size stock, and to provide lectures and opportunities of discussion for those interested in film art and technique. The programmes for this quarter were as follows:—November 4th: **Canal Barge** (Film League of Holland), **Carmen** (Reiniger), **Blue Bottles** (Ivor Montague) **Road to Life** (Nicolai Ekk). December 9th: **Film Poster Abstracts** (G.P.O.), **Schufftan Shots**, **G. B. Cine-Magazine** (Andrew Buchanan), **Pett and Pott** (Cavalcanti-Grierson), **La Passion de Jeanne d'Arc** (Dreyer). January 6th: **Uberfall** (Erno Metzner), **Eyes of Science** (Bausch and Lomb), **War is Hell**, **Under the City** (G.P.O.), **A Child's Dream**. On November 10th an introductory talk to a series of lectures on film technique was given by Andrew Buchanan. On December 15th a talk on the Scenario was given by A. Vesselo, and on January 12th Paul Rotha spoke on Production.

THE RELIGIOUS FILM SOCIETY, General Sec: O. A. Minns, 4, Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4.

In addition to meeting a gratifying increased demand for silent 16mm. Projectors, with the recent placing on the market of acceptable sub-standard "Talkie" equipments, the activities of the Religious Film Society have developed considerably since the Autumn number of SIGHT AND SOUND.

Several London Churches have been assisted (through the Guilds of Light) in purchasing installations of apparatus. A South-east Coast Methodist Minister travels during the week around his circuit of six or seven Churches and village Chapels using a Petrol-Electric generator for the projector in places where mains supply is not available. His generous services in this direction—quite voluntary—are greatly appreciated.

The Religious Film Society recently supplied apparatus fitted into a Ford van complete with A.C. Petrol-Electric generator, for the use of a travelling evangelist working among a group of eleven villages in Hampshire among which there is only one Church having electric light, the others still using oil lamps! This was made possible through the generosity and enterprise of Mr. J. Arthur Rank, one of its Hon. Treasurers.

The Society's new film **Inasmuch** is now available for release, in standard, 17.5 and 16mm. sound-on-film. Its distribution through the Western Electric "road-show" service (16mm. disc) is also contemplated. Judging from the preliminary requisitions already in hand, its reception promises to equal the demand for their first "talkie" **Mastership**, which continues to meet with much acceptance among Churches of all denominations.

SCOTTISH EDUCATIONAL FILM ASSOCIATION.

The Scottish Educational Cinema Society has had a very busy November. Early in the month a successful meeting was held in Greenock and a group of the Society formed. On the 16th the most successful meeting up-to-date was held in Falkirk Technical School. So great was the demand that two "shows" had to be arranged. The Director, Mr. Coutts Morrison was in the chair at the earlier meeting. Stirlingshire should have a prosperous branch of the society.

On the 23rd a meeting was held at Paisley, where a Paisley and district group of the Renfrewshire Branch of the Society was formed.

Since the amalgamation of the Scottish Sight and Sound Society with the Scottish Educational Cinema Society things are moving rapidly. As the stockbrokers say, "the tone is buoyant."

TYNESIDE FILM SOCIETY, Hon. Secretary: c/o The Literary and Philosophical Society, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1.

During the first half of the season, October-December, the Tyneside Film Society has held three Sunday evening performances at which the following films have been shown—**Morgenrot**, **Tonnende Handschrift**, **Don Dougio Farabanca**, **The Road to Life**, **Orpheus in the Underworld** (Famous Orchestra Series), **Hungarian Dance** (Fischinger), **Zut's Cartoon**, **La Maternelle**, **Power**, **West Indian Cattle** (G.P.O.), **Lullabyland** (Disney). Among other activities the programme has included discussions on the feature films shown at each performance, a talk by Mr. Dixon Scott, Managing Director of the Haymarket Theatre, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, on "The Films We Want, from the Exhibitor's Standpoint," and an exhibition in the club-room of the sub-standard version of **Potemkin**. A children's exhibition was arranged in conjunction with the Modern Language Association, and the following films were shown—**Le Petit Roi**, **The Three Little Pigs** (Disney), **Old Madrid** (Fitzpatrick travelogue), **Quaint Pets** (Secrets of Nature). Over 1,200 tickets were issued for this exhibition, and many applications for seats had to be refused owing to lack of accommodation.

The Society is acquiring a small projector and frequent use will be made of this for exhibitions in the club-room during the remainder of the season. An important development which the Society hopes will take place shortly is the formation of a Film Production Group.

It is most encouraging to find that one of the main objects of the Society is being achieved, and that through its influence the people of Newcastle are getting a chance to see publicly some of the first class films which are not usually considered as box office propositions. After seeing **Morgenrot** at the Film Society's performance, the Managing Director of the Haymarket Theatre has decided to show it at his theatre, and has also arranged a repertory week, when he is showing such films as **Don Quixote**, **The Blue Light**, **Loves of Ariane** and **Kameradschaft**.

TECHNICAL AND TRADE REVIEWS

ENDLESS BAND PROJECTORS

By H. D. Waley

IF anyone were to compose a book on the various will-o'-the-wisps which have from time to time lured inventors to their doom he would do well to devote a whole chapter to automatic cinema projectors. The problem of designing a projector which would either run all day in a shop window or stand in places of public resort ready to come into action at the putting of a coin in a slot is a very fascinating one. The patent files for the last thirty odd years simply teem with proposals of this nature which must represent many years of experiment and many thousands of pounds of capital. I have purposely not added the word " wasted " because though all the inventors and their backers have spent time and money without profit to themselves I think that the problems they have attacked will ultimately be solved and that future successes will only be achieved on a basis of knowledge gained from the past failures of others. The main problem which confronts any person proposing to dissipate time and money in this particular way is that of keeping a fragile band—the film—moving without break or entanglement through a high-speed machine—the projector. The longer the band the harder the problem. A band, say, 15 feet long can simply be draped over any smooth bent piece of metal, such as a clothes-hook, mounted on an upright pole placed behind the projector. If compactness is essential a system of rollers can be used round which the film passes to and fro. Bands of from 15 to 50 feet can be dropped into a trough under the projector, the limitation in length arising in this case from the strain imposed on the perforations when the teeth of the top sprocket drag the bottom layer of film out against the downward pressure of all the layers lying on top. This can to some extent be obviated by placing a set of rollers in the bottom of the film container and arranging to draw the film out by a straight horizontal pull from a driven film-sprocket placed in line with the bottom of the container. The patent files also contain drawings for an ingenious container shaped like an enclosed paddle-wheel the idea being that the weight of the film pouring down on to the vanes of the paddle on one side should turn it so that the film on the other side, which has to be fed up to the projector, keeps coming uppermost.

All the above methods are simple enough and we may say that the problems connected with the orderly propulsion of the band hardly begin before a length of 50 feet has been reached. Two factors, however, militate against the usefulness of even a 50 feet band—that very little subject matter can be dealt with in the brief time covered and that where continuous showing is desired a short band passes through the projector an inordinate number of times a day and is quickly worn out. So at this point the ingenuity of the inventor comes into play with the object of providing for a lengthier band.

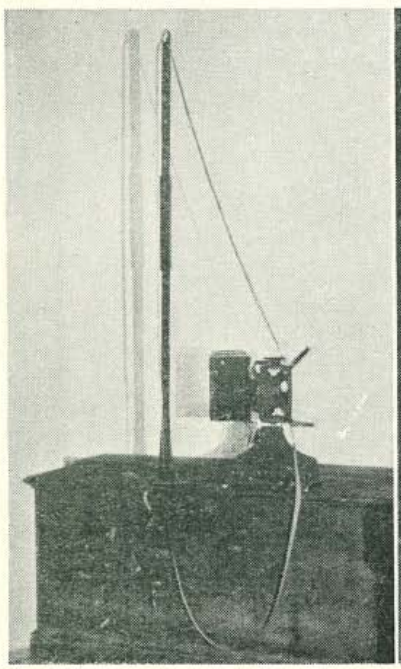


Fig. 1. A home-made device for bands up to 15ft.

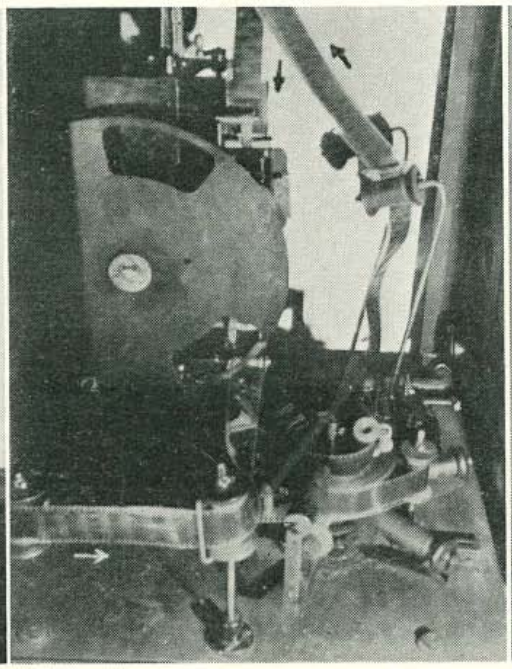


Fig. 2. A single spool projector for bands up to 500ft.

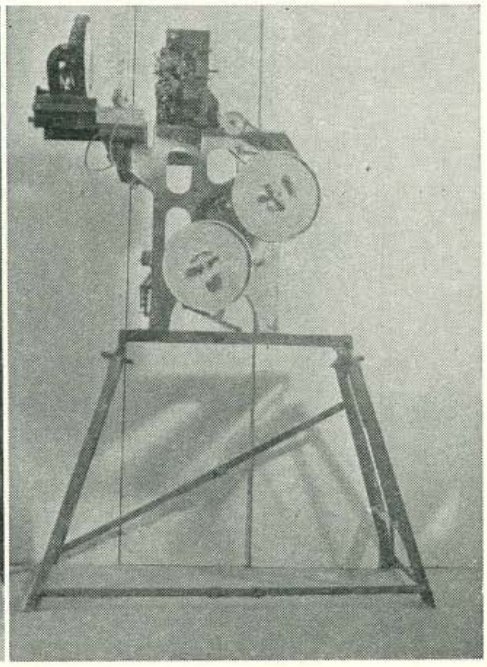


Fig. 3. A two spooled projector for bands up to 1,500ft.

THE BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE

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The British Film Institute exists "to encourage the use and development of the cinematograph as a means of entertainment and instruction." Its objects are:—

1. To act as a clearing house for information on all matters affecting films at home and abroad, particularly as regards education and general culture.
2. To influence public opinion to appreciate the value of films as entertainment and instruction.
3. To advise educational institutions and other organisations and persons on films and apparatus.
4. To link up the film trade and the cultural and educational interests of the country.
5. To encourage research into the various uses of the film.
6. To establish a national repository of films of permanent value.
7. To provide a descriptive and critical catalogue of films of educational and cultural value.
8. To advise Government Departments concerned with films.
9. To certify films as educational, cultural or scientific.
10. To undertake similar duties in relation to the Empire.

WHAT IT NEEDS

In pursuance of this programme the British Film Institute desires to secure the support of all bodies and individuals that have at heart the encouragement of the best type of film and the full development of the constructive uses of the cinema. Alike in the public cinema and in the schoolroom and lecture room, the film has a growing influence upon thought and action. The purpose of the British Film Institute is to encourage the best features of this influence and to draw together all those who are concerned in its exercise. A strong membership of the Institute will be a guarantee that this work is being worthily and fruitfully performed. You are invited to lend it your support either by subscribing as an individual or by inducing corporate organizations to which you belong to apply for membership.

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The Institute being a Company limited by guarantee it is necessary for intending members to fill up the form of application which will be found overleaf and forward it together with subscription for the year ending June 30th, 1935. A copy of the Memorandum and Articles of Association will be forwarded for perusal if desired. Corporate Bodies can become members of the Institute by paying an annual subscription of not less than £5 5s. Such subscribers would entitle the affiliated organization to commensurate privilege of membership.

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THE BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE

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To the Governors

I hereby make application to be admitted to membership of the British Film Institute and agree, if elected, to observe the provisions of the Memorandum and Articles of Association and the Rules and Regulations of the Institute for the time being in force.

I enclose herewith the sum of £1 1s. 0d. (or 10/6, if after December 31st) and will pay annually on July 1st the yearly subscription of £1 1s. 0d.

I further undertake, if elected, to contribute to the assets of the Institute in the event of its being wound up while I am a Member or within one year after I cease to be a Member, for payment of the debts and liabilities of the Institute contracted before I cease to be a Member, and of the costs, charges and expenses of winding up and for the adjustment of the rights of the contributors among themselves such amount as may be required, not exceeding one pound.

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The most obvious solution lies in the direction of winding the film in a single loose coil with an open centre from which the film is drawn out into the projector. After leaving the projector it returns to the outside of the coil. The coil may rest on a turntable or be slung over a sprocket wheel or a ring of rollers. This perhaps sounds simple enough, but there are inherent weaknesses in the method. The natural tendency of a coil, round the outside of which film is being continually wound, is to increase in diameter. This can only be counteracted by an appropriate slippage of the layers constituting the coil. It is by no means easy to control this slippage so that it is neither excessive, in which case the film will strain at its sprocket-holes, nor deficient, in which case it will jam up against the side of its container. Moreover in any event the dust which is bound to get between the layers acts as an abrasive on their continually frictioning surfaces. Nevertheless this type of apparatus is the only one which has ever yet got as far as commercial production. The Verkehrs Museum at Nurnberg has employed coin-freed " Kolm " projectors and the Galeries Lafayette in Paris a " Speico " projector, both 35 mm. projectors of this kind, while, with regard to substandard film, Pathe, Kodak, Bell-Howell and Bolex projectors have been marketed with attachments of this sort, though I believe they have never met a ready sale. Devices of this sort have always proved troublesome with reels over 300 feet in length, and, even assuming that they will run shorter lengths without unduly straining and scratching the film, the difficulty still remains that after 100 runs or so the joints in the film will start to break. Some designers have indeed taken this difficulty as their starting-point, and sought to eliminate joints in the film. This can be done, for instance, by using a film which carries two rows of half-width pictures side by side. The film is made to travel to and fro, projecting the rows of pictures alternately. Some three years ago an American inventor demonstrated to the Society of Motion Picture Engineers a method which carried precautions against accidental film breakage to an extreme point. His film was intentionally divided into short bits which were sheathed in metal, stacked like a pack of cards, and propelled past the projection gate by an electro magnet.

I have myself been guilty of constructing a few experimental endless-band projectors which avoided the difficulties inherent in the single-spool method by employing two spools each wound with a double layer of film and mounted on a rotatable arm, so that they automatically changed places whenever one spool became empty. A device of this kind will deal successfully with endless bands of considerable length (I have on occasion run bands as long as 1,500 feet) but is necessarily rather bulky and intricate. In fact one might sum up by saying that the present fragility of non-flam film robs the endless band machine of its theoretical superiority over a machine running normal spools of film and reversing itself at the end of every run. For a machine of this type, though it wastes the time spent in re-winding, is much easier to re-thread each time the inevitable breakage occurs. The principal causes of film breakage are tension above or below the projector and the jerking strain of the intermittent movement at the gate. Consequently one may assume that under existing conditions it would only be possible to construct a reliable endless band machine for prolonged running, if a very short band were used, which would naturally occasion little tension above and below, combined with a non-intermittent projector, which would minimise wear in the gate. The inventor's dream of an operatorless projector running a lengthy film will not, I fear, come true until non-flam film is made of something tougher than cellulose acetate—perhaps stainless steel as has been proposed by a group of German inventors. For the present we must content ourselves with apparatus which will only project short bands and will only project them a hundred times or so without breakage. It seems possible that apparatus of this kind would have applications for teaching purposes which have not yet been fully explored. It is true that the Dance Kaufmann Company has specialised in producing scientific subjects capable of being run as " cyclic " endless bands, that is to say subjects which come round again after a short succession of phases to the point from which they started. But there seems no reason to assume that the true cyclic film is the only type of short endless band which could usefully be employed in teaching. For example, if the cyclic film method were employed in sports instruction, swimming and rowing would offer sequences of repetitive action such that the illusion of unbroken continuity could be maintained. But this does not mean that nothing could be learned from short endless bands showing as repeated movements a single golf shot or a single cricketing stroke, simply because these actions do not happen to have beginnings and ends which join up naturally.

In fact I feel one may go further than that and say that there is something in the essential structure of all teaching processes which is fundamentally akin to the repetitive showing of a short sequence of film. Teaching must inevitably consist in the analysis of a subject into its simplest terms, and even these simplest terms are liable to require a good deal of repetition before they become firmly fixed in the memory of the student. This is the justification of the short endless band from the point of view of pedagogic theory. It also possesses various practical advantages. As already mentioned a short band requires no elaborate adjuncts for its propulsion. Moreover there is no reason why short bands should not be sold cheaply. The cost of material and processing would be very low. Production costs, which are the main obstacle to the creation of an educational film library, might be kept down to a negligible level by drawing on the vast wealth of potentially instructive film which at present lies neglected in the vaults of companies concerned with newsreels and similar productions. Even specially-made diagrams could be cheap if limited to a short footage. I have stressed this question of cheapness because the possibility of buying films instead of

hiring them would revolutionise the whole technique of the teaching film in that it would get the film into the classroom whereas it at present has hardly any foothold outside the school assembly room. At present the schoolmaster feels that the arrival of a hired film is a special occasion and that it is a waste of opportunity if anyone in the school does not see the film. Therefore his film-showings are all mass-showings to the whole school. Such showings only permit the introduction of very broadly-sketched educational matter. If he possessed a permanent library even of short films his whole attitude would be different. He would use them in the classroom to illustrate some definite point to a particular class. This cutting down of the size of his audience would both enable him to use the film as an adaptable medium, stopping, repeating, and commenting at will and also (owing to the greater brilliance of a small picture) to show in daylight, thereby solving problems of note-taking, discipline, and ventilation. In short a very strong case could be made out for giving short endless bands a serious trial as an educational medium, not as a substitute for longer films, but as a supplement to them. Cuts from Nature films showing a single biological process, such as the opening of a bud or the wing movements of a flying bird, cuts from a historical drama showing period costume, cuts from travel films showing both special phenomena and normal native life would clearly serve a useful purpose. In fact I imagine that the only one of my contentions regarding their use which is likely to arouse contradiction is the suggestion that they can be safely run with the film slung over an ordinary metal hook. It might be supposed that constant running of this kind would soon scratch the surface of the film. Actually, however, this does not occur because the edge only of the film can touch the hook, since the curve which the film takes lengthwise round the hook prevents any curve forming across its width. The film is thus prevented from settling down into the bottom of the hook and becoming scratched. Probably a film could be run in this way quite a thousand times without serious damage. Of course even a thousand runs would be quite inadequate for a film set up in a projector in a Museum gallery for the public to turn on at will, though here again the short repetitive film might serve a very definite purpose. It would hardly be feasible to run a film in these circumstances unless four or five thousand runs per copy were attainable. This could probably be achieved by a non-intermittent projector with optical compensation. In this connection it may be interesting to note that one of the first motion picture viewing machines ever constructed was an endless band machine. without intermittent movement—the Edison Kinetoscope of 1891. In this case of course intermittent movement was dispensed with by avoiding projection altogether and simply viewing through a magnifying glass and a rapidly rotating slit. But we may, if we choose, regard it as an instance of Edison's remarkable intuition for the essential points of every problem which he grappled with.

AMATEUR FILMS AT THE ROYAL PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

An interesting display of amateur films took place at the R.P.S. in November in connection with the Society's competition. The showing of amateur films was preceded by a demonstration of the Pathe 17.5 mm. sound-film.

The subject chosen was one of the Secrets of Nature series, The Wood-wasp. While it is pleasant to know that the Pathe company proposes to keep this splendid series alive, it is to be hoped that the photographic quality of the print we were shown is not typical of the best which their reduction-printing can offer, as though the sound was good the picture compared very unfavourably with the amateur takes which followed (and, I need hardly add, with the original negative). Indeed, as was to be expected, the photographic quality of the amateur films shown maintained a very high standard. But the high standard of photography and spatial composition tended rather to throw into contrast the low standard of cutting and editing which is at present almost universal in non-professional films. To some extent no doubt it is inevitable that this should be so. The sequences in professional films which succeed one another with so pleasing an appearance of inevitability are generally the survivors of vigorous selection from an abundance of material. The amateur cannot afford this process of wholesale scrapping. To some extent, however, they are the result of forethought in taking, and this commodity is not expensive. One could not help feeling during the display a wish that the photographers would keep up a running commentary on their own films for the benefit of the audience. This may have been partly due to the corruption of audiences by the ubiquitous talkie, but also indicated, I suspect, a fundamental failure on the part of the competitors to grapple with the problems of editing a silent film. Yet it is to the amateurs that we must now look for the keeping alive of this difficult art. At present they seem for some obscure reason to fight shy of the straightforward explanatory title and to know of no method intermediate between title-less linking by expressionist montage and humorous trick-titles which often force themselves rather unduly on the attention to the detriment of the film as a whole. It would, however, be unreasonable to stress the present shortcomings of the amateur film, for the display did certainly provide a large audience with an exceedingly enjoyable afternoon. H.D.W.

FILMS AT THE RUBBER EXHIBITION

In connection with the Rubber Exhibition organised this winter at the Science Museum, South Kensington, a section of the main gallery has been partitioned off in order to form a miniature cinema-theatre, where films illustrating the manufacture and uses of rubber are shown four times daily. The theatre accommodates about 50 persons and projection is from a 16 mm. machine—Kodascope K. H.D.W.

SMALL TONE FILMS, 186, Wardour Street, W.1, announce that in future they are supplying only the Photographic Dealers' Trade.

THE YEAR'S TECHNICAL PROGRESS

The past year has been one of comparative stability in design, especially with regard to 35 mm. film. The exhibitors have thus continued to enjoy the welcome respite which came to them some two years ago from fears that their apparatus might at any moment become obsolete through the introduction of a wide film, an all-metal film, a stereoscopic film, or theatre-size television. Only those colour-systems have been able to make headway which demand no adaptation in the projector.

It is true, however, that improvement in sound-recording is being slowly followed up by the installation of reproducing apparatus capable of doing justice to a wider range of frequencies. The problem of designing speakers of increased range, which is so essential a part of this question, is also receiving attention, as those who heard Mr. Voigt's recent demonstration before the British Kinematograph Society will have appreciated. Those who are opening up new theatres can now consider the possibility of using alternating current in their arcs instead of installing rectifiers or converters. But in most respects the inventors have left the exhibitors in peace this year.

With regard to sub-standard film, however, there have been several interesting developments. As foremost in importance I should be inclined to rank the arrival of Spicer-Dufay 16 mm. reversal colour film. That amateurs now have at their disposal a colour film which they can expose in their ordinary cameras and project with their ordinary projectors, marks a very definite milestone on the path of sub-standard progress. The next stage to be looked forward to is the completion of arrangements for multiplying prints on sub-standard stock. Once this stage is reached the opportunity will open up of developing the enormous potentialities of the colour film in documentary and instructional work.

The exhibition of Kinematography organised by the Royal Photographic Society in November offered a good opportunity of appreciating in a glance current tendencies in substandard design. 16 mm. sound-on-film projectors occupied a prominent position. Indeed the opening of a children's cinema at Norwich equipped with apparatus of this type shows how serious its claims are. Moreover it is interesting to note that Messrs. Kershaw, makers of the well-known " Kalee " theatre projector, have thought it worth while to enter the field of 16 mm. silent projectors. Another recently introduced projector which caught my eye was the " Celfix " with interchangeable gates for 16 mm. and 9.5 mm. films. The German " Nizo " projectors exhibited by Mr. Roth carry the same idea to its extreme point, consisting as they do of a motor-and-lamp unit on to which the whole movement can be bolted and connected with a driving belt. In this way adaptation for 16 mm., 9.5 mm. and 8 mm. is made available at a moderate cost. So long as the present diversity of film standards continues, interchangeable projectors will continue to perform a very useful function for those who regard libraries rather than their own cameras as sources of film, amongst which class of user we must of course count the educationist. If one may include in this year's progress machines which are already heralded but have not yet arrived in this country, mention should be made of the new Bell-Howell 16 mm. projector equipped with 1,000 foot spools and a 1,000 watt lamp. One would however, look forward to its arrival with more enthusiasm if the existing 500 watt and 750 watt 16 mm. lamps had not such short lives that one feels a certain doubt as to the policy of projector designers in continually raising the wattage of lamps whose dimensions are necessarily limited.

An innovation which will be welcomed by all those who have regarded with anxiety the risks involved by the popularity of the 35 mm. toy cinema with celluloid film, is the introduction for the Christmas market this year of 16 mm. and 9.5 mm. toy projectors. To sum up, this has been a year in which substandard cinematography has extended in both directions—towards new high levels of technical achievement and new low levels of price. H.D.W.

NEW APPARATUS VIEWED

KALEE "N.P.3," 60, Wardour Street, W.1.

The new Kalee 16 mm. projector incorporates a number of features which are of special interest to educationists. The showing of a still picture has been rendered particularly simple by means of a device which ensures an open shutter when the film is stopped, and a drop-shutter of heat-absorbing glass enables the still picture to be held indefinitely. A reverse action is also provided. Damage to films by loss of loop is guarded against by a trip-mechanism which automatically declutches the motor. Provision is made for either a 400 watt or 500 watt lamp, and the prudent step has been taken of incorporating a type of lamp-switch which lets the current into the lamp in stages. This device ought to give these high-wattage lamps a far better chance of attaining a reasonably long life. Another refinement not often seen in amateur projectors is the provision of a thumb-screw adjustment for taking up wear on the shuttle of the claw-movement. This should ensure absolutely steady projection even after prolonged heavy use. Altogether the projector appears to be designed along simple and robust lines. In the demonstration which I saw a 500 watt lamp was used and so brilliant a picture was given that I got the impression that a 400 watt lamp would suffice for average use. The 500 watt lamp would however be useful where a specially large picture was required, or for showing in a partially-darkened room. The price—£64—seems exceedingly reasonable for a machine of its class. H.D.W.

BRITISH KINEMATOGRAPH SOCIETY MEETING

On December 17th, Mr. G. Pocknall read a paper before the Society on " English Cameras."

He dealt first with the Vinten camera, describing its points in some detail. In particular the functioning of the movement was illustrated by a film showing the interior of the camera in action, taken by another Vinten camera speeded up to 80 frames a second. A test film was also shown demonstrating the perfect steadiness and registration of the camera. Next the Newman automatic was discussed, the lecturer having on view his own instrument and tripod to which he has fitted certain special devices. Lastly some short sections of film were shown taken by the new slow-motion Newman automatic camera, which will take up to 120 frames a second. Mr. Pocknall's most recent films have been taken for the Gaumont British instructional unit, and will therefore be familiar to all who have been following the recent developments of educational cinematography.

H D.W.

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